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# SIERRA LEONE AND THE GAMBIA.

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## CHAPTER I.

INDIFFERENCE TO PUBLIC OPINION.—OBSERVANCE OF SUNDAY IN SIERRA LEONE.—ABUSES OF RELIGION.—MISSIONARIES AND MISSIONS.—AFRICAN LETTER WRITING.—RELIGIOUS MEETINGS; THE CHURCHES NOT FIT PLACES FOR HOLDING THEM IN.—EPISCOPACY WANTED TO THE CHURCH IN SIERRA LEONE.

IF the difficulties of propagating Christianity and spreading the blessings of civilization be impartially considered, the advancements which education and religion have made in Sierra Leone must be ranked amongst the most remarkable evidences of the glorious fruits of Negro emancipation. And yet, as I have said, Society in the colony, with respect to Morals and Manners, is a century behind what in the common order of things it ought to be. It would be foreign to the nature and object of these sketches to attempt a systematic and philosophical explanation of this fact. I would only here remark that one palpable

reason for its being so is, that *public opinion* does not exercise that commanding control over the conduct of men which it must do to restrain them from those acts, which, although not subjected to human laws, are amenable to a higher than an earthly tribunal, and which are justly repudiated by every community, not altogether insensible to a sense of shame and propriety.

One redeeming feature is, notwithstanding, perceptible in its elements; and it is the strict regard which is almost universally paid to the Divine purposes of the Sabbath. And I am sorry to be obliged to admit that the exception, when made to this encouraging fact, is made by the European and not the Native: by those whose obligations and standing in society demand from them a better example. The general observance of Sunday, even in Free-town, would shame the metropolis of our own country. In the missionary and far distant villages and districts the Deity is more revered in this particular than in many places in England.

It is not, however, only in the opposition and lukewarmness of men, respectable in other points except in morals and Christianity, that Religion experiences opposition. Probably she suffers much more from the sacrilegious liberties which are taken with her by Ignorance, Presumption, and Fanati-

cism. It is shocking and lamentable to see and hear the indecent, and, I fear not to say, blasphemous freedom which the most ignorant seem to think they are authorized to take with the most solemn services and most holy offices! The *Finding of the Lord*; the *Ecstatic* and *Convulsive Demonstrations* of *Indubitable Conversion*, with other similar exhibitions of misguided zeal and infatuated weakness, inflict a deeper wound on Christianity by the contempt and ridicule to which they expose it, than, perhaps, Infidelity and avowed Ungodliness.

It will be read, I am persuaded, with surprise almost bordering on incredulity, and yet it is undeniably true, that to such extremes of religious extravagance are Presumption on the one hand, and Toleration, or call it what you will, carried out on the other, that one who is not of the Established Church, neither English nor African, nor duly recognized by the Wesleyan Connection, has nevertheless been known to preach in an Episcopalian church in his every-day blouse, whilst regularly ordained Clergymen have sat in the Desk. The same abuse has been tolerated in one of the District churches. A Wesleyan minister once asked this extraordinary personage of whom I am speaking to officiate in his chapel. To the horror and astonishment of the unsuspecting Wesleyan, this person,

whom he had allowed to supply his place, deliberately took off his coat before he commenced his oratory. It is unnecessary to say, he was never permitted another opportunity for such an exhibition of originality. The invariable and all-engrossing subject of this man's preaching was Tee-totalism. His charity and good opinion of the Sierra Leone clergy was so enlarged and favourable, that he hesitated not to consign in no moderate language or very disguised expressions, all ministers but one to everlasting perdition; and this highly distinguished mortal he honoured by translating him to the Third Heaven! When children are brought to this eccentric assumer of holy functions for Baptism, he administers this Sacrament not in the appointed way, but *dedicates* them to God in the following manner: he makes the parents place their hands on the head of the child, and then declares and charges them with the responsibility of their own offspring's salvation! That such a monstrous perversion of what is so sacred should be practised, is not extraordinary; but that it should receive so much as any indirect sanction and encouragement, is a reflection on those who connive at it. All this is bad enough and deserves publicity; but Ignorance and Presumption are not satisfied with these intolerable absurdities. The notions of this dan-

gerous and foolish enthusiast, whoever he is, go so far as to cause him to use *water* instead of wine, in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper.

What I am now speaking of naturally leads me to say something about Missionaries and Missions on the Western Coast. The subject is a delicate one, but it deserves some remarks. I deny not to the missionary the credit of having done much good; but I cannot acquit him of inconsistency in some points of character. Censoriousness and exclusiveness are amongst the weaknesses of his nature; nor is he exempt from those failings which he himself is too ready to discover and use to the annoyance and injury of others. The clergyman, however, is the last man who ought to be the habitual censurer of his neighbours' ways; much less does it become him wantonly to attack the dearest of all rights in the persons of other ministers of the Gospel. But there is a great deal of this unamiableness, the consequence of little minds and confined education, which can only be seen and felt upon the spot. There is, too, a strong disinclination to reciprocate duty, or exchange acts of brotherly kindness, excepting among themselves. I do not say they are wrong in doing so; but it is unfortunate for the cause in which they are employed. If, however, they do not choose to meet the wishes of others who would gladly co-

operate with them, they may spare themselves the trouble of interfering with them and their actions. All men have not the same gifts, nor do all attain unto the same standard of spirituality; one man may materially differ from another in his views and ideas of Christian Liberty. Yet there may be as much honesty of purpose and sincerity of zeal in his composition, as in those who are for ever carping at trifling discrepancies, and who, instead of occupying themselves in their own appointed sphere of duty, are ever meddling with the business of others. Without wishing to detract from whatever merit belongs to missionary efficiency in Sierra Leone, I can only observe, that the missionary sphere of labour there deserves a much higher standard of education and liberality than it enjoys at present. That feeling, whatever it be, and in whatsoever it originates, which can induce men to withhold the Christian courtesy of acknowledging or thanking their brethren for service rendered to the Common Cause, and which has been solicited by themselves, is unworthy of a worldly-minded man. In those whose profession is sacred it is contemptible and sinful.

But what shall we say of that vituperative temper which makes the due observance of ceremonials a subject of censure, and cannot listen to a faithful exposition of the truth without qualifying the

praise it is forced reluctantly to give, by discovering some cause for objection in him who delivers it? If a minister in Sierra Leone turns to the altar in repeating the Belief, he is uncereemoniously accredited by those of his own cloth as a Puseyite ! Does he want assistance, an inordinate love of mammon is charged upon him. "He's very glad to get the duty done ; but he keeps the money." Yet no men are fonder of their comforts, live more independently, and are better paid in proportion to their abilities and services, than the Missionaries. Whatever be their other merits, high-mindedness and politeness of manners belong to another school. Talk of Privations ! Why, their lot is princely compared with hundreds of highly educated and graduated clergymen in England ! Give to every man, be his profession or calling what it may, his due ; but let us not try to get ourselves looked upon as more self-denying than our neighbours, with every domestic comfort and convenience of life about us. One great error it is to be hoped we are free from on the Western Coast, which is not without precedent in some Foreign Missions, and this is the custom of Ministers trafficking in worldly goods and gain.

As to Missionary work in its progress and results it is pleasing to reflect upon the success which has universally rewarded its efforts. The



Village Church and Parsonage, the Day as well as Sunday Schools, so well managed in their mode of discipline and instruction, and the general quiet behaviour and teachable disposition of the inhabitants, afford the most satisfactory proofs of the good it has accomplished. The Girls' Schools deserve particular notice. The scholars work exceedingly well at their needle ; and I have seen some specimens which are very creditable to them and their teachers ; but the utility of fancy work may be questioned. In the Boys' Schools, where the treatment of the pupils is also satisfactory, the only apprehension is, that Instruction may exceed the wants and circumstances of those on whom it is bestowed, and thus produce with the benefits of education, future disadvantages if not evils to society. Impart as much Christian knowledge as it is possible to Africa, and give it that share of generally useful knowledge which all parties within it, individually and collectively, in their relative grades of life, appear capable of receiving. But make not *all* Greek and Latin scholars, or Fancy Needlewomen. Raise not desires which are never in the ordinary course of things to be realized ; and commit not the mischievous error of calling forth talents which it is locally impossible can be employed. Before you try to qualify every one for a clerkship or official situation, take care

•

that the merchant stores and other offices are sufficient to answer the artificial demand you thus make for them.

The following is a choice specimen of original composition, which will show the use and misuse of the power of reading and writing. It is a literal and faithful transcript of what was penned. The subject of communication is a love affair:—

“My dear love,

“How do you do, hoping you are well at present. As you are very anxious to receive a note from me—so I take opportunity of writing to you: to enquire of your welfare and that of your Parents. I hope they are quite well—My Dear think not that I shall forget you,—Can I forget him, who will never forget me, far away? If I forget thee, let my right hand forget her that bore me—If I forget thee let the moon forget to give her light—My love to you is great—more than I am able to express—Love without measure—Love beyond degree—Oh! how I love thee! I often think of thee in the day, as well as in the night. Thou art more precious to me than thousands of gold and silver; yea, if they should give me fifty houses full of gold and silver—I will not forget thee—I will love thee still—Oh, had I the wings of a Dove I would fly immediately and come

to see thee and kiss you again—Think not that I forget you Dear—I do always remember you.—Dear, please to thank your mother for the kind present she sent me by Mr.— I hope and do trust that I shall never forget her kindness to me from the time I was a little girl until this present day.

“ Mr — shews me much kindness as a brother, and he always gives me good advice. When ever I shall see you I will tell a brief sketch of it.

“ In Conclusion Be vigilant because your adversary the Devil as a roaring Lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour—Look—ever look to Jesus—Live near to God—Let not your heart be troubled ‘ Look unto Jesus the author and finisher of your faith ’ Surely there is an end, thine expectation shall be fulfilled, I commend you my dear to the grace of God ; which is able to illuminate your mind—and to govern your spirit, and to present you to his kingdom—Kiss—Kiss—Kisses—Farewell—Farewell my sweetest love.

“ Yours truly,

“ —.”

Such effusions as these may serve to show how easily a misapplication may be made of the most sacred phraseology, and what an instrument of folly Learning, even in its earliest stage, proves, when employed as in this example without dis-

crimination. But this ridiculous perversion of terms and parrot-like use of expressions are of common occurrence amongst the lower classes of Sierra Leone, and only show the distortions to which religion itself is liable in the hands, or rather the mouths, of this class of persons.

Religious Meetings rank amongst the many cheering evidences of the right influence of religion upon the hearts and minds of the children of Africa, notwithstanding there is so much still to deplore in its society. The two principal meetings are the Bible Society and Church Missionary Society. I have attended both of them and can speak therefore of the unanimity and Christian spirit which on these occasions, at least, characterize them; Churchmen and Nonconformists, forgetful of minor differences, meet together as members of one Christian family—to aid in promoting one and the same work, the diffusion of the Gospel and the circulation of the Scriptures. And I have heard some excellent speeches — full of simple piety and good sense from the Native advocates of the respective societies. These laudable endeavours to co-operate in promoting the kingdom of Christ will be strengthened, if care be taken to avoid all invidious comparisons, which in such a population are certain to produce collisions hostile to concord.

These meetings are held in the Churches, a practice I consider extremely objectionable, for it is not possible in such numerous and public assemblies at all times to avoid that excitement which will disclose itself in a manner unbecoming the sanctity of the House of Prayer; and I have heard such clapping of hands at the close of the speeches, as would better become a theatre than a building where the Most High is worshipped. In the Colonial Church these meetings are discontinued. The plea that there are no buildings large enough to receive those who attend these meetings is no authority for profaning the sanctuary by noisy manifestations of applause. Moreover, in a rising community such as that of Sierra Leone, it is not always to be expected that the wisest or most unexceptionable expressions will invariably accompany the most fervent zeal or the sincerest piety. And levity, or anything tending to produce merriment in the House of God, can be sanctioned on no considerations whatever.

*Episcopal jurisdiction* is wanting to Sierra Leone. At present there are *unconsecrated* churches and churchyards; a body of clergy numerically strong, and yet without a Chief Pastor to give advice and encouragement; an infant generation instructed at Baptism to receive, when of age and understanding, the Church Rite of Confirmation,

and yet there is *no Bishop* to consecrate and confirm. Constituted as the Colonial Chaplaincy is at present, and inefficient in many ways from the want of local Church government, it would be far more desirable to do away with the office altogether and apply the salary towards the fund for the support of an Episcopate. The church—from its size and situation—is not undeserving the title of “Cathedral;” and the house of the late Hon. James Hook, if the Retreat could not be obtained, would make a suitable residence for the Bishop. I should not think any sacrifice on my own part, not even the resignation of my present office, too great to promote the accomplishment of so necessary a measure; and the opportunities I have had of ascertaining how open and accessible is the field of ministerial labour up the Gambia, confirm me in the opinion that an Episcopate is early due to the Western Coast of Africa.

## CHAPTER II.

A LEVEE AND A SCENE.—AN OFFICIAL DINNER PARTY ; ITS SWEETS AND BITTERS. — POLITICAL CONSTITUTION OF SIERRA LEONE, AND ITS DEFECTS. — POST-OFFICE AND POSTAL MATTERS. — FREQUENCY OF MARRIAGES AMONGST THE NATIVES. — MARRIAGE LICENCES ; NEGLECT OF BANNS, AND CONSEQUENCES ; BEHAVIOUR AND DRESS ON THESE OCCASIONS ; MARRIAGE RINGS ; IGNORANCE OF PARTIES ; EXTRAVAGANT INDULGENCIES AT MARRIAGE FEASTS.—A MARRIAGE SCENE AT REGENT.

HALF a century has done wonders for Sierra Leone. Bad as it is, if it were not for fevers and calomel it might be sufferable ; for Cannibalism is out of fashion, and the only wild beasts of which you stand in any fear are those which walk and do not crawl. Even these are so far tamed as seldom to manifest any more alarming ferocity than occasionally to growl and snarl. In looking back and comparing the present with the past, we cannot indeed but observe upon the tameness and docility to which such a heterogeneous multitude of human beings have been brought in so short a period. Sometimes, however, little disorders will steal unsuspectedly into the body

politic and create a temporary palaver, but they are only highly entertaining.

On the arrival of an English, French, or any other Commodore, he is received, of course, with all the honours due to his rank ; and all officials soon get an order to appear in full costume to exchange looks and salutes with him. Although rather a tedious and suffocating affair occasionally—for we muster in no very spacious apartment, and have seldom any other part to play than that of mutes, the chief performers being the Commodore and the Governor,—yet it is sometimes amusing. Uniforms of all sorts, from the plain blue coat with the gilt-crown button to the simple yet magnificent full-dress of our navy ; magistrates, judges, doctors, captains, commandants, secretaries, and I cannot tell who besides, meet together to be exhibited. If the lions of the day happen to carry on the dialogue in different tongues, in which neither of them are particularly well versed, the fun is exquisite. Interpreters, it is true, are not difficult to be obtained at such a place, where French, Spanish, Brazilian, Portuguese, are continual visitors. Still there is always, of necessity, in the process of interpretation, an inconvenience which makes a meeting of this kind somewhat awkward for all parties, particularly the leaders. So long, however, as all goes on



smoothly, seldom anything occurs to attract especial notice. But when two stars come together, which cannot keep their lustre in one sphere, and fall into collision in their movements, all the minor satellites are unavoidably and naturally set in motion.

An exciting little palaver of this kind once occurred on the arrival of a French Commodore. The Governor was absent on some business; and through some mistake or omission in the exchange of official etiquette with the Colours of the respective Nations a temporary misunderstanding took place. The Frenchman was nettled, but nevertheless paid his visit to Government House, where we were assembled to receive him. He was a fine, officer-like old man, remarkably easy and collected in what he did and said. Explanations, of course, took place. Our Gallic friend did not appear to be satisfied, and the English representative was rather warm upon the subject. Eyes and ears were all in action. The noise of the sword on the ground, together with the words which accompanied it, evidenced a little impatience on the part of the Saxon; and he properly said, that if the Frenchman were not satisfied he could refer the matter home; but the Gaul took it very quietly. What a different scene would such a meeting have presented a few centuries ago under

such circumstances ! But people are getting wise enough to squabble and contend with words rather than blows ; and so, after much ado about nothing and a good hour's punishment in being obliged to be spectators of the comedy, we were permitted to return to whence we came, greatly edified, as the reader may suppose, by such a morning's adventure. Pending the discussion, the Lords in waiting, as might be expected, were not unmoved by the debate, but played their part in the comedy by some by-acting, as a little ogling and simpering with one another. The affair was so far of consequence that it supplied us with harmless matter of light table talk for a month afterwards, until something new sprang up. And what was that ? That friendly salutes were fired, and national colours sported their heraldry in the air at the same time ; and John Bull and Monsieur fraternized prettily together on board the touchy old Commodore !

Dinner-parties are much more agreeable and desirable methods of paying one's respects in a formal manner to august persons at Government House than these Levees. The obligation to button yourself up to the throat in an African climate and turn out in a broiling midday sun, with neither busts, nor pictures, nor any sort of curiosities, artificial or natural, to amuse you, while moving up and down the hall staircase to

the Receiving-room, is an intolerable grievance. Fortunately, there is not much of it.

The Royal Birth-day in the Colony is always celebrated with liberality and spirit by the Chief Magistrate, in the issuing of a number of cards to the heads of departments and others; and you then are able to see and judge what African cooks and waiters can accomplish for the table in the best style of Sierra Leone. To get this arranged properly is no easy work; for the servants are for the most part incorrigibly stupid; and before every thing is ready for operations, your appetite, if you have any, and patience, are generally tortured by having to wait an hour over the time fixed for the attack. When you have found out your ticket of sitting, and taken your place, if you are anything of an epicure, you will have to manœuvre for your self, unless you are "A. No. 1." on the list and near the lord and lady of the feast. Ask for what you will, look as ill-natured as you please, frown at the servants, it is of no use. They will bring you every thing but what you want, and improve your dress-coat either by tumbling some indescribable compound over it, or upsetting and breaking a decanter or candlestick. The black fellows are so completely bewildered with the dazzling light of the chandeliers, the red coats and blue, the epaulettes and ornamental buttons, the

glittering of plate and sparkling of glasses, the clattering of knives and forks, and the nodding of heads as the bumpers fill, that the duties of the attendant are forgotten in the fixed stare and broad grin, which tell his delight and wonder. On these rare occasions also, stiff white neckerchiefs and white gloves, contrasting oddly with skin as dark as ebony, are worn by the servants, and to these they pay more attention than to your wants or orders.

As I have been repeatedly asked, "What do you eat and drink at Sierra Leone?" "How do you live?" "What do you get?" I will try to convince the reader that we cannot complain of want of delicacies or substantials. Half a sheep at one end of the table, or a quarter of an ox; capital soups of native cookery as well as of English manufacture; fish, curries, stews, a turkey, pastry, sweetmeats, fruit; and then for wines—port, sherry, claret, champagne of various qualities, requiring some taste and judgment to make a satisfactory selection, and a little practice to know exactly where at the table to find them.

The cloth being removed the usual vinous honours are paid to the day with every appropriate compliment; and although we have not yet arrived at such perfection as to preface our glorious Queen's health with "Non Nobis Domine,"

yet hearts and hands, and eyes and voices, and overflowing glasses, and the soul-inspiring national anthem of the Mistress of the World, and a very respectable militia band, all combine to testify the affection she receives and deservedly, in every part of the globe ! Indeed we make a very respectable display of our loyalty on the Twenty-fourth of May, to the credit of our governors and ourselves. What we so much want to give *éclat* to our proceedings are more fair faces and gentle ladies' conversation. Refinement will never chasten our enjoyments where Female influence does not preponderate ; and although the piazza and cigar are all very well and agreeable in their way, give me the drawing-room to retire to after ten o'clock, a French cup of coffee, and half an hour's conversation with an amiable and sensible woman. Bachelor's celebrations of these anniversaries are sometimes too free and lengthened in Sierra Leone ; and the old saying, " All's well that ends well," is never more practically useful than when it is made the motto of such feasts.

The most amusing part of the performance on these or any other large, or state dinners, is to watch the operation of drawing the corks of the champagne bottles. The sable attendants have a great dread not only of spoiling their own clothes, of which they are very vain, but also of the power

of confined air; and if you do not exercise a little circumspection and have your eyes about you you will get a greater share of the grape than you wish; perhaps a disagreeable blow in the eye from the cork.

With the exception of two or three Anniversary entertainments such as I have been speaking of, the year passes away in this respect with little worth notice; for we have not, as in other colonies, our Council and Legislative dinners and balls. The Political Constitution of Sierra Leone is extremely limited, and in my opinion too contracted to be sound or useful. All the affairs of the colony are transacted by a Council consisting of Seven, and its public business is carried on by this body of officials, without any reference to public opinion. Nothing whatever is known to the public of the measures in discussion or completion; and there is by far too much exclusive power vested in the seven to allow of its being beneficial. I do not question the integrity or ability of those who compose this body; but it is absurd to believe that human nature is less liable to its weaknesses and prejudices in Sierra Leone than anywhere else; and a majority out of seven may be as willing as able to propose and adopt measures which may be politically and constitutionally disadvantageous or injurious to the interests of the community, simply

perhaps from the fact of their conscientiously, but erroneously, considering them to be necessary and practicable. Public discussion is the strongest safeguard against the neglect or abuse of public rights; and as men are ever divided about religion as well as politics, in belief as in practice, it is impossible to say how the governing power of a colony in all its affairs—commercial, political, civil and ecclesiastical, may be exercised when in the exclusive possession of a few. Individual caprices, personal piques, private jealousies, conflicting interests unchecked by the control of public investigation, may in a part of the world like the Western Coast of Africa be indulged with an impunity fatal to the public weal. Houses of Assembly, acting in concert with Legislative Councils, are the best correctives and antidotes for political mal-administration; and the habits of business, intelligence, common good sense of the superior portion of the Native population could furnish without difficulty an efficient legislature of this description.

We have a Post-office in Sierra Leone, but it requires remodelling throughout in all its arrangements. In the first place it is fixed in the Colonial office, which is highly objectionable, as affording an opportunity to idle curiosity, or perhaps a less excusable propensity, to overhaul and learn your correspondence, if disposed to do so.

It is bringing the public and colonial government into too near intimacy in their private matters for the post-office to be where it is ; and this is a fact. Let some really efficient townsman, unconnected with government affairs, and not holding any official office, be appointed to so important a trust ; let his office be in the most central and convenient part of the town at his own residence ; bind him over to a faithful discharge of his duty in available and good securities ; suffer not any person to enter his office but himself, or overlook the letters and papers ; let it be unlawful for him to divulge the addresses of correspondence to any one received or transmitted home. Let no delivery be made until there has been ample time for sorting the letters ; and instead of placing a notice up where it is now generally done when the mails are to be made up, pay a man for ringing a bell through the town from one end of it to the other, that every one may have timely intimation when they will close. As the Mails do not arrive regularly, the present plan of notification is not fitted for such contingencies ; for in the event of any unusual delay their departure after arrival is necessarily accelerated, and it is utterly impracticable for men of business to be ready on the short notice they sometimes have to make up their correspondence. It is a great deficiency that there is not some one



found to act as Postman to Free-town and within a given circumference to deliver the letters on arrival of mails at a fixed premium per letter.

The Post-master receives an ample remuneration for his trouble, which is not much ; and there can be no excuse for a want of prompt and correct delivery of letters and papers, as the Mails are never particularly overladen with supplies, and touch at Sierra Leone only once in the month, and seldom so frequently. But the most unpardonable circumstance connected with Postal transactions in the Colony, is that of the opening and resealing letters before they have reached their lawful owners. Where the fault is I pretend not to say ; but the fact is so ; and it is to be regretted, that a disposition on the part of a few gentlemen to represent the imperfect state of the Colonial Post-office to Col. Maberley, was not acted upon.

Not the least important subject of consideration, as regards the laws and regulations by which the colony is governed, is that of Marriage Licences ; and I have often dwelt upon it with a firm conviction, that the present method of granting them has a tendency injurious to morals and religion. Marriages very frequently occur, but chiefly amongst that class of people in the colony who are led to enter into that contract more from impulses of passion than other considerations ; so that they too often

fulfil the saying, "Marry in haste, and repent at leisure." The Fee for the Licence is not more than a dollar, or half a dollar, which is, I believe, the perquisite of the Secretary; and therefore the means of preventing illegal and illicit connections I do not conceive are in any way sufficient to check their occurrence. For it is not possible, as the Licences are now granted, to adopt any method of ascertaining if there are any objections to the marriage of the parties, in such a widely scattered and continually changing population. It would be useless to apply any such precautionary restrictions as are common in England, where the applicants are so many and so little known, and the fee is so small. If I am not mistaken, the Missionaries adopt the Publication of Banns as much as possible, and very properly encourage it as the most safe and becoming method of removing all difficulty and doubt on the eligibility of the persons. I do not believe I have published banns once since I have been chaplain in Saint George's Church. By the Licence System, a marriage can of course be solemnized in Free-town immediately after it is obtained and the same day between the Canonical hours of eight and twelve. By the banns' mode three several and clear Sundays and two weeks must elapse before a marriage can take place, thus affording the fullest scope by its publicity, as well as the

interval it allows for investigation, if any suspicions of unfitness arise on the case. To induce the common and more desirable method of notifying persons' intentions of marrying the Colonial Executive would do wisely to raise the fee for licences to such a sum as would amount to an almost universal prohibition of them. This would not take from the fair perquisites of office, and the difference might be put into the Colonial Chest. It is very seriously to be apprehended that cases of Bigamy are not unfrequent under the present licence system; and I must confess that, in the generality of cases which fall to my lot, I am uneasy while performing the ceremony.

The behaviour of the applicants for the bonds of Hymen is, for the most part, decorous; but I am sometimes compelled to read them a lecture, as well as the friends who attend them; I make however every allowance for their not knowing better. The most troublesome and unpleasant part of the duty is to regulate and keep in order the ill-behaved, and very often disreputable characters who noisily and irreverently crowd into the church on such occasions, and would, if not restrained by severe and decisive interference, bring their indecencies and ribaldry up to the railings of the altar. I have often been obliged to send for a policeman to preserve decorum; and then the

miserable beings will run out of the church with laughter and grins and every other expression of ignorance and contempt. The Dress of the Bride and Bridegroom at the bridal merits a better pen than mine to describe it. The uglier the parties, the more pains they seem to take to show it off to the utmost, by the most conspicuous contrast of colour and finery. Fancy a short, dumpy, waddling bit of a body, black as jet, covered with white silk or satin! Flounces four deep, white satin shoes, white gloves, artificial wreath or a fillet of natural flowers encircling her curly pate! There is no exaggeration in this. Then the massive ear-rings of virgin gold depending from two monstrous lapping-ears, the almost imperceptible nose, the pouting lip, and white pearly teeth! So much for the Bride! Now for the Bridegroom! Scarcely able to turn one way or the other, so tightly is he cased in a blue, swallow-tailed coat with gilt-figured buttons, white folding waistcoat, and everything else to correspond! The Wedding-ring must not be overlooked, as it is frequently a curiosity itself and not always of gold, or plain, but sometimes silver, brass, tin, broad and twisted. The glove of the bashful lady has generally to be violently taken off to admit the putting on the finger the precious emblem of fidelity and perpetuity of love; and I have never

wanted volunteers to officiate for me in helping the most interested of the party to get the ring honestly and fairly in its appointed place.

The most painful part of my duty in these matters was to get them to repeat the words of the service after me. The wretched stupidity they would show in trying to do this exceeds belief; and the unseasonable ridicule it would provoke in their own people was distressingly trying. In short, their utter ignorance in numerous cases of the nature of the responsibilities they were undertaking could not fail of causing regret that they marry at all.

After the ceremony is over they are very fond of parading themselves through the streets, but cannot conceal the uneasiness they are manifestly suffering from a style of dress to which they are not habituated. Not unfrequently the new married couple take off shoes and stockings, tuck up their smart flounces, and in this more simple way of travelling, pursue their path homewards, to conclude the day with the marriage feast.

These Connubial Suppers are conducted, according to the circumstances of the parties, on a scale equal to, if not beyond, their means. The earnings and savings of many months are expended, in furnishing them with what their notions of good things deem necessary for so grand a palaver. To

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use a homely expression, they set their hearts upon being able to hoard together as much of every thing as they can purchase or otherwise obtain, and very often foolishly expend all they possess. It would astonish our good people at home, could they witness not only the lavish profusion of consumables supplied, but the expensiveness of the articles, and the quickness with which they disappear from the table. Wines they seldom indulge in, but ale they freely patronize. So anxious do they show themselves about this part of the business of the day, that I have had assigned to me, as an urgent reason for my marrying them on one day rather than another, that they have provided for the feast on that particular day and have sent out their invitations accordingly. For consenting to their wishes a respectable piece of wedding-cake, quite in English fashion, has occasionally found its way to my table. The style and manner of conducting these matters depend, of course, on the rank and affluence of the parties; but the lowliest make something of an effort on their wedding-day to gratify, in some way, their vanity.

I once accompanied a friend to one of these suppers, and was much amused and agreeably surprised at the manner in which it was arranged. The parties were of the orderly kind. The evening repast took place under a kind of rural canopy,

put up for the occasion in the yard of the premises belonging to the happy pair. Boughs of evergreen, with flowers intermingled, were suspended from the temporary roof; and, dependent from transverse poles hung candles, which lighted up the interior very cleverly. Fruits, piles of wedding-cake and substantials, with ale, and, here and there, a shy bottle of wine graced the board. Roses and other flowers flourished in the button-holes and dresses of the guests, who numbered from twenty to thirty. The Bride seemed to us to be the most forlorn of the party and quite forsaken. She was a well-behaved and modest person; but there she sat, between two other dark sisters, neither eating, drinking, nor speaking; talked about and looked at, whilst all about her were busily engaged. As I was informed afterwards, this is a custom very common to the natives, that the Bride should exercise this self-denial. At last, one of the party, a respectable and grey-headed man, rose to propose the health and happiness of the newly-married couple, which he did in a simple, unaffected speech, enlarging upon the honourable estate and duties of marriage, and concluding some well-expressed admonitions to the bride and bridegroom with his benediction. Great respect was paid to what he said, and this piece of oratory was followed by speeches of a like character.

## CHAPTER III.

SETTLERS AND MAROONS; THEIR FORMER HOSTILITY TO EACH OTHER.—MEDITATED ATTACK ON GOVERNMENT HOUSE SOME YEARS AGO BY NATIVES AND THEIR CHIEF.—NATIVE DEPUTATION TO ACTING GOVERNOR.—A SINGULAR CASE OF INDIVIDUAL SUFFERING, RECOVERY, AND RELIGIOUS VIEWS PRODUCED WHILST LABOURING UNDER THE ATTACK OF FEVER.—A PARALLEL INCIDENT WITH DIFFERENT RESULTS.—BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE BARRACKS.—ITS SITE AND PROSPECT.—SOME REFLECTIONS ON THE PENSION SYSTEM AT SIERRA LEONE.—THE BARRACKS AND PROSPECT FROM IT.—ATTENDANCE OF TROOPS AT CHURCH.—SERVICE ON BOARD MEN-OF-WAR.

NURSES, as well as Old women have their tales and stories; and many a weary hour during the progress of my convalescing, before I could quit my bed, has dame Ashley beguiled away by narrating some interesting incident connected with Sierra Leone. For much of the information contained in this chapter I am indebted to such sources of local knowledge.

There are two races of Africans in the colony of Sierra Leone, which deserve more particular notice from some peculiar circumstances connected with



their history, and which show what an influence has been wrought on the dispositions of the natives, as well as on their habits and manners, by the means employed to humanize them. Some years back, the hostility which was carried on between them rose to a height alarming to the public safety, and the most desperate frays which took place amongst these contending parties were of such a nature as to require the interposition of military force. It seems that Christmas was the time when, as if by tacit, yet mutual consent, they prepared for reprisals; and at that season, I am informed, such was the bitterness which characterized their enmity to each other, that it was not safe for persons known to favour either of them to be found abroad after a certain hour in the evening. Not satisfied with accidental rencontres, they would take the trouble to search out each other singly, or in numbers, to gratify their spirit of malevolence and satisfy their vengeance in acts of outrage, which no restraint short of the strong arm of the law was found able to keep under and suppress.

These factious tribes are distinguished by the names of "Settlers" and "Maroons." The former are said by some to trace their origin to the native race called "Sherbro Bulloms;" but those of whom I am now speaking as involved in the transactions we are considering, were, unquestionably, Blacks

from Nova Scotia. The latter are identified with a class totally different, which emigrated from Jamaica, and arrived in Sierra Leone in 1800. Happily, this feeling, for which I have not been able to ascertain the real cause, has quite given way to the benign and softening spirit of the Gospel; and the proud minds of both parties have learnt at length to humble themselves and think more favourably of each other as beings of the same species, and fellow-creatures whose future destinies, as to immortality, are alike.

The Settlers are intelligent and industrious, given to enterprise, and of active habits, possessing also considerable independence of spirit. In religion, they are of Lady Huntingdon's persuasion, which in fact they themselves introduced into the Colony upwards of fifty years back. "Papa" Elliott, whom I have already introduced in these pages, together with another of the principal adventurers, erected a chapel in Free-town at that time, which, together with one at Hastings, Waterloo and Goodrich, they have themselves supported and supplied with Ministers up to the present period. They are easily distinguished from all others by the remarkable neatness of their dress and cleanliness of their persons. Some of the old women may be seen with their neat bordered caps tied under their chins, their shawl-handkerchiefs

folded crossways round their chest, and a full-gathered apron tied with a broad band about their persons. Their shoes and stockings show a great deal of care and punctilio in the arrangement of them; and some of the younger damsels adorn their heads with handkerchiefs tastily twisted round, on which is deposited a straw hat or full-napped beaver hat with broad brim.

I have every reason to believe that the Schools belonging to the connection of which they are members are, in discipline and attendance, very creditable to the superintendents, particularly in Free-town, where their best chapel, called the Mariner's Chapel, is erected. In front of this there is a flag-staff, whereon colours are hoisted every Sabbath as a signal of invitation to such mariners and their officers as may be disposed to go there for worship. Some silly and ill-timed objection was made to the putting up of this signal-staff, as if people were doing a forbidden and unconstitutional act, but it was wisely dropped. A considerable meeting was held on this occasion in the Chapel, and some very good remarks made, in the way of addresses, by various speakers—a person of consequence kindly taking the chair. It deserves to be mentioned of them, that notwithstanding they belong to the Huntingdon class of Christians, they have received no assistance without an equivalent for it from the

Home Society — and, I believe, have never until lately so much as solicited it. It is a pleasure and a duty to notice this circumstance, inasmuch as the foul spirit of detraction, so prevalent in the colony, cannot spare so respectable a body of Believers, but will attack individually the characters of its ministers as well as its general movements.

As for the Maroons, they may be said to be upon an equality in most respects with the Settlers as regards intelligence and habits. They also have a chapel in Free-town, spacious and well-built, which is well attended. These people, I am told, have very singular appellations for different persons amongst the less educated of them, and consider it a high compliment to address a pretty girl by the name of “Puss,” which is a substitute for Miss. I could not for some time learn what such out-of-the-way names implied as “Tittie,” and “Bobboh,” until a friend informed me that the former signified a daughter, young or grown up; and the latter a son, whether a minor or of full age.

At one time the residence of the Governor, as I am informed, was surrounded with thick bush. It is now an open space with little growing upon its grassy surface but a few young fruit trees lately planted here and there. An attack it is said was made upon it some years back by a party of

Africans, headed by their Chief, who was instigated to the deed by his people. The sentinel, alarmed by some noise made by the enemy in their approach, advanced on the battlements to reconnoitre, when he received his death-wound from an enemy concealed in the bush, whence the assailants meditated the assault by surprise ; but they were thus foiled in the attempt. The Chief escaped to his own land, but was ever after degraded and despised for having alienated his patrimony; the utmost contempt being manifested by the tribe towards him for having thus disposed of his ancestor's right.

It is a very interesting sight to witness an Embassy of some particular country pay their visit of respect or congratulation to the Governor. I happened fortunately to be at his house when the late Acting-Governor had to receive a Deputation of this sort, and he kindly requested me to remain. The exchange of civilities was made by the assistance of an interpreter ; the Deputation wished him long life, prosperity, and happiness, and expressed their gratitude by strong religious invocations that he was appointed to the office which he then held. The Deputy promised to take care of them, rule them well, and preserve to them their own religion free from all unjustifiable interruption. He then did me the honour of introducing me to the Headman and Priest, as the "Big Parson," and bows of

courtesy passed between us. They were dressed in the common white vest, resembling the surplice, wore sandals, had large broad-brimmed native straw hats. Their respective Gris-gris and portions of the Koran were incased in leather around their necks suspended down their breasts, and two or three of the principal persons carried long staves, and were attended by special retainers. Their carriage was upright and dignified, and they measured their paces as men accustomed to be looked upon and treated as something superior. For example, when shaking hands with any superior European, the Chief or Headman in extending his right hand for that purpose supports it by placing the left hand to the right arm between the wrist and the elbow. This is intended to signify the weight or honour of the deed considered by the native to be received from the former.

The following narrative, from the same source of information to which I have adverted, is full of incident, and is a matter-of-fact occurrence. In the year — my nurse was called upon to attend a Mr. R——y, of the Commissariat Department, who was “laid down” with a severe and nearly fatal fever. Soon after he was seized with his illness he grew worse, and as he thought was a dying man. From some previous misunderstanding with the medical officers, he would not suffer them to come

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nigh him, but sent for the nurse. "Mrs A." said he to her, "I am very ill; I have a family at home; but I'm not on terms with —, and there are no other surgeons in the place," (the Sons of the Lancet were then limited to two practitioners). "My life," he continued, "is in their hands; now I will not take any of their medicines if they send them; there is my medicine chest (and he pointed significantly to a table); whatever *you* give me I will take—do as you like with me; but preserve secrecy and let the medical officers think I have taken their prescriptions."

Poor Mrs. A—— felt very uncomfortable; her position was a hazardous and delicate one; but she was experienced, firm, and tender-hearted; and in her varied experience of patients she had seen much—much of suffering, neglect, and strange doings. Her tongue, however, was silent on all she saw and heard. Mr. R——'s case, she perceived, was a desperate one, and life seemed hanging on a thread. He was as cold as ice, to use her own words, nor did she expect that he would last many hours. However, she set about her work to do her best for her patient. Whilst attending on him, an evident desire, she said, was shown by certain parties to remove her and get another nurse.

"You must be very tired," said — to her; "consider your children: should you get ill what

will they do? You had better go home and take some rest." The nurse saw the drift of the assumed anxiety about her, and deeming it prudent to conceal whatever she suspected and act on the advice, went away for a day or two, purporting, however, to revisit her patient and watch him in the meantime. Her place was accordingly supplied. Mr. R—— was in high delirium at the time of Mrs. A——'s departure, but on recovering from it, to his surprise, found his favourite nurse gone. He remonstrated with —— for having acted as they had done, and against their wishes desired Mrs. A—— to be recalled. All this looked very curious. "Why did you leave me?" said the sick man to her. "Because," she replied, "I was ordered to do so, notwithstanding I signified your desire for me to remain." Mr. R—— looked at her attentively, but confidently. The nurse was a little confused. "I pay my nurses," exclaimed Mr. R——, suddenly and somewhat angrily, "and not these men. You will from this time remain here, see the end of this matter, and close my eyes. These doctors may send whom they please, but I wont pay them." So strong was his prejudice, whatever were the grounds for it, justifiable or not! Mrs. A—— promised obedience and remained.

But now for the pith of her story. One even-



ing the patient was heard to cry out and call repeatedly for a light, saying that he was in total darkness, although a candle was kept burning in the room. The nurse endeavoured to convince him that there were lights on the table, but Mr. R——y persisted in demanding what he at first cried out for. “Oh give me a light, for the L——d’s sake give me a light; it’s all darkness; read the Bible to me; fetch the Bible for Heaven’s sake; bring that book to me if you would not suffer what I do.” Supposing that delirium had again seized upon him, she complied with his request; but a work was going on within him of a nature she dreamt not of, and which he did not himself perhaps at the time clearly understand. He read that book and prayed—prayed fervently; there could be no question, sincerely. Well, nurse and patient were left once more together. The learned disciples of the school of Æsculapius departed, perfectly satisfied that the drums and fifes would be in requisition on the morrow; and on this supposition gave out that he *must* be a corpse before day-break. Death, however, was for once balked of his prey. To the astonishment of every one and of the nurse herself, Mr. R——y underwent a material bodily change. He sat up in his bed, shaved and dressed himself, and then lay down on the bed quietly, at the same time calling the nurse

to him. He then recounted to her his past life, dwelt earnestly and regretfully upon it as utterly at variance with anything which could authorise him to hope for any benefits from Revealed Religion. He declared to Mrs. A—— that when he so earnestly and repeated called out for a light and exclaimed that all was darkness he was experiencing the alternate effects of two distinct conditions. One while he seemed to be plunged in “darkness made visible,” and to be possessed of all the racking torments of a reproaching and condemning retrospect. Then the vision as quickly passed as it came ; and hopes and assurances of a state of forgiveness and peace cheered and soothed him. Bright and happy and glorious Spirits appeared to pass and repass before him ; and he saw and knew a Book, on which was written a name that is linked with Heaven. It was the Bible he so eagerly pleaded for on awaking. Mr. R——’s life had not been, I believe, worse than that of men, ordinarily, who pass for good sort of harmless people—so thought Mrs. A—— ; but on his total convalescence he became a very different person from what he was before his attack, and she said continued so whilst in the Colony. I do not pass an opinion upon the reality of the fact of conversion. As I received the account so I relate it ; and so far as the circumstantial of the story are concerned, I believe them to have been truthfully narrated.



Poor Captain ——! How different thy fate! Yet, hadst thou to bear the heavy trial of thinking, whilst on a bed of pain and sickness, neglected and despised, that there were those afar off who could have eased thy pillow of anguish and ministered to thy dying wants; but between whom and thee ties of the dearest and most sacred nature were to be broken, never to be re-united on earth! This is the severest ordeal of all which suffering humanity has to undergo on a foreign shore when struck by fever or any other dangerous illness. Fond recollection will revert with stronger impulse and more vehement desire to those whom links of love and conjugal affection have joined together, when threatened with a separation for ever in this life, without the last consolation of exchanging tokens of farewell: and the pang will be the severer which tortures the heart with such a reflection. When once dislikes are taken and prejudices formed, whether deservedly or not, it is melancholy to think to what extremes of resentment and ill-will they will urge men, otherwise amiable and forgiving. Captain ——, was not a favourite with his brother officers, but the cause of his unpopularity it is not for me to record. He was taken ill, and it was not designed that he should ever return to the walks of life. He was, however, neglected, and left to his fate. Just so much attention was

paid to him as could not, without challenging inquiry, be withheld. In his extremity he was attended by my good nurse, the Dame, who found him not only in the last hours of existence, but in the most pitiable condition of want, and exhibiting signs of the grossest inattention. He was nevertheless sensible, and thankfully received the kind treatment of the nurse; but it was of little avail. Thoughts of the widowed wife and orphan child forced from him a sigh and the mention of their name. He met his end like a soldier, calm and collected; but if he had sins to be forgiven—and who has not?—Captain —— showed no signs of conversion.

I mention this case as illustrative, like the last I spoke of, of a state of society some years ago in the Colony, when professional men could be victimized in life and in death; for had it not been for the spirited and Christian interference of Nurse A——, not so much as the posthumous rites invariably bestowed on the dead, would perhaps have been allowed him. And, after all, he was borne to his grave, the back way from the Barracks, with little of the honours of a soldier conferred on him. It is not so now in Sierra Leone. Justice, however, was afterwards done this injured officer by a relative, who took up the case and successfully vindicated for him

when dead, the rights which had been refused to him when living.

As I am now at Military Quarters with my reader, we may as well look about us and see if there are any Lions worth noticing. To the right of the Barracks as you approach them is a small elevation, opposite the south-western gate, on which are planted some field-pieces, and where, properly, the salutes should be fired instead of from the old fortification which forms part of the premises of Government House. The former position is more eligible from its higher elevation and more remote locality from the town. But every one has his particular taste. Close by the battery is a piece of ground enclosed with a lime hedge, which is used as a kitchen garden and cultivated for the supply of vegetables for the garrison. They thrive freely there, and yield a fair return for the labour bestowed upon them. Cabbage, turnips, and carrots, herbs, and other products of that nature succeed very well. Upon entering the gates, the Officers' Quarters are directly before you; and very good they are. So are those which are occupied by the men. They are surrounded with piazzas, which are roomy and airy; and half-windows have of late been introduced to those belonging to the former. So long to have withheld this indispensable improvement in a climate where light, next to air, is of

paramount consequence, is surprising, when public money has been expended on objects far less important. But, for years the officers were obliged to sit in, comparatively, darkness, when the rains prevailed, as all the jalousies of necessity were then fast closed. And, if indeed, these half-windows of glass were made whole ones, the Service would lose nothing by the additional expense. The Officers' Piazza, however, is a noble range for all the purposes of convenience and exercise; and the view from it is more complete than from any other building in the town. You have, indeed, a most perfect circular sweep of the whole country around without any interruption; and nothing can be more beautiful and picturesque than the numerous and diversified objects which spread themselves over it. With the exception of the residence of Mr. Melville, a Pensioner Judge of the Mixed Commission Court, which stands on the highest ridge of hills in the vicinity of Free-town, the Barracks are unquestionably the most healthy situation about this metropolis of the Colony.

In mentioning Pensions as referable to Officers obtaining a claim to them in Sierra Leone, I will offer a few remarks on this subject, which, involving as it does, so many interests, all entirely depending "on the hazard of a die," is entitled to the most serious consideration of the British Government.

The position of Civil Officers under the Crown in relation to such a provision is exceedingly painful and hard. To some no positive or fixed remuneration by way of retiring salary is granted. Others, who are more fortunate in this respect, run immense risks in obtaining it. The Wives and Children of these servants of the Crown are worse off than all others, being exposed to that most distressing of all casualties, the daily uncertainty of a subsistence wholly resting on the lives of those who are toiling for them on the dreary shores of Western Africa. For the refusal of most Insurance Offices to risk a life at Sierra Leone, is in the first place, one obstacle to the officer making a provision in this way for his family; and where there is a disposition to grant a policy, the premium is so enormous and the conditions of Insurance so extravagant, that it is not practicable to meet them. In truth, they amount to a virtual refusal. Eighteen per cent. and one hundred pounds deposit, besides expenses of policy, insuring for one thousand pounds, would subtract rather considerably from an income of five hundred a year. Then, the after-calculation; should the insurer be so fortunate as to escape with his life, what a predicament he would find himself placed in, even allowing he gets a pension of half that value! What if he has none? For of course he must

continue his policy on the same terms or forfeit everything!

As to individual economy and prudential frugality, it is a very easy matter for persons in England, living in luxury, at their ease, and with all the feasible prospects of running out their natural term of years, to talk and philosophise upon such matters. Consistently with the claims upon him, as a Government Officer, to keep up his rank and dignity of office, it is out of his power to do anything, or at least, very little, in this way. But whether he can or cannot, this is a private, and not a public question. Ninety-nine out of a hundred do not live long enough to carry out this principle of economizing to any good effect with an income admitting the practicability of it: five out of six have not the income to do it.

Probably after serving for many years, and within a few weeks of the expiration of his time of probation, sickness and fever overtake him; he is compelled to return to England to save his life; and yet that unfortunate victim of what may with truth be called a harsh policy, must, willing or unwilling, return to the scene of his danger and illness at the imminent hazard of his life, to complete a month of his servitude, or he forfeits everything! All the time of his leave of absence is deducted; so that what with loss of health and salary, the Civil



Officer has a very encouraging prospect before him ! How many are there at this time receiving handsome pensions—and for what ? It would be difficult to say. Certainly not for having endured a fractional part of the miseries to which men on such foreign service are subjected.

There is my much-lamented friend, the late judge of the mixed commission, who within a few months of being able to claim his pension—half the salary—has fallen a victim to the horrible climate ! With a numerous family at home, it was not possible for him to maintain them in a manner suitable to their position in society and his rank, and to keep up his own standing in the colony as a government officer ought to do. And yet a wife and children must be compelled to bewail in poverty the loss of their only support, unless the Government either pension her or allow her what has been allowed to the widows of officers falling in *actual service at their posts of duty*, and that is a *twelve months' salary*. In such cases there ought to be no hesitation. A humane and liberal British public will never refuse to the widow and orphans of such men the consideration they so fairly claim.

As for those whose only hope rests on the provisional mercies of mere opinion to determine on the merit of their service, whether the Civil officer shall starve or not, when, from a broken

constitution and shattered health, the consequences of exposure to a deadly atmosphere, he can no longer remain at his post without almost certain expectation of perishing there, their case cannot surely be refused the privilege of an appeal. Their condition is even more precarious than any others, and pitiable enough when we reflect on the narrow ideas most people have of Foreign service, as well as their inability, from being unacquainted with its nature, to form a fair estimate of the merit which is to determine their pittance. For there is very frequently as much of this commending power in the quiet unobtrusive every-day routine of a Civil officer's duty—as much self-denial, suffering, privation, and self-control to be exercised, as in the more ostentatious displays of a popular and attractive service. I must own, I think it scarcely justice, for example, to the Colonial Chaplain's office, that, exposed as the officer in that department is to all kinds of weather, in burying the dead and tending the sick, as well as to other vicissitudes, he has no fixed retiring salary, proportionate to his reasonable claims, considering the chances decidedly against his coming off "scot and lot free."

So long as it is considered desirable to retain Europeans in office on the western coast of Africa—and I believe it will be allowed by the majority

of persons who know any thing about the matter, that—if they were withdrawn from Sierra Leone, she would soon cease to “know herself”—some more permanent and equitable arrangement in the Retiring Pensions and Superannuated Allowances is called for in justice to those officers. One plan has often occurred to me as perfectly practicable, and which might in some measure lessen these claims on the public treasury: if every Civil officer, married or not, should be required to pay out of his salary a per centage towards a Sinking Annuity Fund for his wife and children, the annuity to be rateable according to length of service, and to be claimable after the first year's service.

The area, which comprises the barrack-yard, and is strongly enclosed by a wall pointed with loopholes, must be considerable. There are the remains of an old tower in the yard, formerly used, I suspect, as a gunpowder magazine, which, standing solitary as it does by itself, although otherwise not worth notice, yet, as it is, becomes an object of inquiry. It is impossible to describe the enchanting appearance of such a prospect as presents itself to the eye from the piazza of the barracks on a clear tranquil moonlight night; and I am thoroughly persuaded that a more popular subject for the Colosseum could not be furnished to the lovers of such representations. There are two or three

pencils in Sierra Leone which could not be better employed than in making a Panoramic sketch from Tower-hill for that purpose. A lively imagination and fertile fancy might revel over such a scene, so broadly marked are the contrasts formed by the surrounding objects; such a romantic spell invests the habitable plane below you; whilst the Sugarloaf, the father of the mountains, frowning in loneliness above the tributary hills which enclose the vale beneath, only needs a genius to give a local habitation to the beings of superstition and the nightly gambols of elves and fairies !

At this hour the large blocks of black rock scattered about the declivities between the garrison and the town would recall to recollection the well-known tale in the "Arabian Nights" of the transmutation of those adventurers, who, failing to fulfil the condition of their errand, were changed by the enchantress into similar things. But when the night is moonless and dark, if you have to retrace your steps into the town after an evening of conviviality with your garrison friends, it is rather a formidable affair to accomplish; for not only may you by a mistake tumble over some of these imaginary transmutations to the injury of your limbs, but at the hazard of a "descensus in Avernum," for some deep and break-neck ditches and ravines made by the furious torrents in the

ruins are ready to receive you. To tell the truth, I was never very partial to either a walk or a ride down this road when it was late, and was always glad when I found myself safe in the highway.

It is a pretty sight to see the troops marching down the winding slope from Tower-hill to Saint George's, on Sunday, to the sound of drum and fife; for although it is optional with the garrison to have service performed for them in barracks, they adopt, to their credit, and I am sure to their benefit, the choice of attending the colonial church in fine weather. The men behave extremely well during service, much better than many others, who, notwithstanding the plainest admonitions on the impropriety of continually going out, are incessantly disturbing the congregation in this manner, and in the habit of hurrying away noisily before so much as awaiting the Benediction. The importance of bringing the men to an appointed place of Public Worship must be obvious to every one who considers the force of example, and how much is lost every way to the performance of religious duties when not solemnized by the forms and ceremonies of a spiritual worship—and enforced by the reverence which is never so fully imparted or so effectively preserved as in the House of Public Prayer.

Next to the Church, I have always been led to

consider this reverential feeling most strikingly exhibited on board a Man-of-war, on Sunday when all hands are mustered to Divine worship. I was twice asked to officiate, on the *Philomel*, and another vessel of that description, and nothing could exceed the solemnity of the occasion. Not an oar nor a paddle disturbed the still, transparent deep. Every vessel, to the smallest craft in harbour, had colours flying from aloft in respect to the day. Then such cleanliness, such order, such manly decorum; not the mere effect of mechanical obedience to fixed rules of conduct, although, as the consequence of discipline this is not lightly to be esteemed, but arising from a becoming sense of what is due to religious obligations. For the British Man-of-war's man, with all his faults, is not so insensible to them as many may suppose. The preparations and arrangements themselves have something imposing in them and favourable to serious thought. The drum, with the colours thrown over it; the sacred volume open on a cushion; the officers in full dress uniforms; the mute attention throughout the line of men drawn up on each side, and the profound and breathless silence as the consecrated servant of the Most High, rising from his own preparatory devotions, delivers the introductory sentences of our sublime Liturgy, is a moment of intense interest, which

none can feel who are not actual partakers of it. Then to listen to the responses so audibly, so uninterruptedly coming forth from men accustomed to the wildest and the roughest life, on a deck as white as snow—and softly dying away over the ocean waters—affects the soul in a manner not even felt, I believe, in the Church itself. The officer commanding the *Philomel*, who, poor fellow, since then has fallen a victim to the climate, had called on me to ask my services for his crew, as the rain prevented them from attending the Colonial Church,—a request I was too happy to comply with; and accompanied by the Acting Governor, my good friends the Commissariat and Commissioner, with one or two more, we proceeded on board. As far as I was concerned, individually and ministerially, I enjoyed the discharge of my duties more that morning than I had done for a long while before. I only hope, should I ever return to Sierra Leone, more frequent opportunities may be afforded me of a privilege as delightful as it is sacred.

## CHAPTER IV.

PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF A CHIMPANZEE.—A DOCTOR'S JOKE AND AMUSING CREDULITY.—SHORT ACCOUNT OF ANIMALS. — CONDITION AND PROSPECT OF TRADE IN THE COLONY.—CAUSES OF ITS DECLINE IN REFERENCE TO THE ENGLISH MERCHANT. — UNEQUAL COMPETITION. — MOST PROFITABLE PRODUCTIONS OF THE COUNTRY.—GROUND-NUTS AND GINGER.—THE YAM, A PROFITABLE ARTICLE OF SALE, BUT NOT SUFFICIENTLY GROWN. — FACILITIES TO THE GROWTH OF THE COTTON-PLANT. — ITS GREAT IMPORTANCE TO AFRICA AS WELL AS ENGLAND. — NATIVE METHOD OF WORKING THE COTTON. — THE CULTIVATION OF IT A MEANS OF SUPPRESSING THE SLAVE-TRADE.

I WAS sitting in my piazza watching from the window the Swallows winging their rapid flight in the clear grey sky of Evening, and trying to follow them in their mazy evolutions through the air, when I heard shouts of triumph and rejoicing, and observed crowds hastening towards the Upper or Kroo Town Road, as if in pursuit of some object of interest. It is seldom that any demonstration of public excitement occurs in Free-town, for there is little or nothing to provoke it. My curiosity was, therefore, more quickly awakened :



and, looking out, I perceived a number of people coming down the street, bearing on high in the midst of them, and tied to a pole, a huge creature ! As the crowd advanced, the real nature of the beast became more apparent. It was a "Daddee" Chimpanzee,—

"Monstrum horrendum, informe."—

He stood nearer five than four feet high. His muscular powers must have been great ; and when the length of his arms, his activity, and power of agility in all his movements are considered, he would have proved a formidable antagonist for a fair single fight on equal terms in the choice of weapons, such as a constable's staff, with any human being. I much question if it would not have been found easier to pull a Boa Constrictor by his tail out of his hiding-place, than to have mastered this brute with measured cudgels. One of the garrison medical officers tried to preserve the beast, but could only succeed with the bones, which, however, would fully satisfy any one of his formidable powers. This specimen of the Chimpanzee was shot in some of the neighbouring woods ; and very odd stories are related of it. The noise and uproarious delight which the crowd manifested in their public exhibition of it would have induced you to think they were instigated

by feelings such as when the poet, dramatizing the fate of a human monster, moved him to write—

“ We ’ll have thee as our rarer monsters are  
Painted upon a pole ; and underwrit  
*Here may you see the tyrant !* ”

I cannot refrain from narrating a very amusing story which has for its foundation a circumstance which actually occurred in Free-town, and is a rather humorous instance of credulity. A young man, an Englishman, who had just arrived in the colony, expressed a great desire to see one of these extraordinary animals. The jocose Doctor of Free-town, hearing of his curiosity, purposely invited him to his house, promising to gratify his wish by the sight of a fine specimen of a full grown Chimpanzee. Accordingly this novice in African curiosities hastened with delight to the Doctor's, who, in true Scottish style, having prepared the way for the exhibition by shewing the stranger and his friend some proof of hospitality, proceeded to gratify the new comer. Calling in, therefore, one of Her Majesty's ebony-coloured apprentices to the medical science and art, an ugly, deformed little bit of a man, he said to him, without having hinted at what his object was, but causing the Englishman to understand this was the animal he so much desired to see,

“ Mr. Quashie, what is this, Sir ? ”

At the same time he showed this supposed Chimpanzee a doubloon. The diminutive being shrugged his shoulders, rolled his eye-balls, dark and sparkling, about the room, whilst an almost unnatural smile animated his features, and in gruff incoherence made answer:—

“Three pounds, nine shillings, and four-pence,” squeaking out the reply, moreover, to the astonishment of the curious inquirer, who was at a loss to know what to think of it.

“Pray, Sir,” continued the facetious Doctor, assuming an air of sternness and authority, as if addressing himself to an irrational,—at the same time nearly smothering his nose with country snuff, which he scientifically plied with a large goose-quill,—“do you think you can carry as much, Sir?”

“I will try, Sir,” rejoined the apprentice.

“Then go directly, Sir,” resumed the Doctor with a knowing smile; and the questionable Chimpanzee hobbled out of the apartment, shrugging his shoulders with not a little consequence.

“Now, Sir,” pursued the Doctor, appealing to the staggered inquirer after Animal Knowledge, “what do you think of my Chimpanzee?” Astonishment, doubt, incredulity, perplexity, unitedly and alternately, were evidently at work in the stranger’s mind. He could not, and yet he was

fain to believe the fact, that Her Majesty's liege subject and apprentice to the Healing Profession was verily—a Wild Man of the Woods.—I need not say, the Doctor prides himself upon this harmless cheat !

Now and then this species of Baboon is brought into Town for sale ; but, generally, when very young and small, and then they are very harmless and amusing. Few living animal curiosities are to be met with in the colony. The Bush Cat, although small, is a fierce little creature, and a sad enemy to poultry. It somewhat resembles our domestic vermin of that species ; but of course in the wildest form. The Ground Pig is another of the four-footed race which infests stores and any place where there is anything good to be got. It is an ugly savage animal, about the size of a large ferret, and can bite to your cost if it has a fair chance. A ground pig hunt is a laughable scene ; and, when driven into a corner in a room, it is not despatched without some trouble ; for as the servants seldom or ever wear shoes and stockings, it is not without some degree of fear and caution that they attack it at close quarters, and then only with lengthy sticks. The flesh of this animal is eaten by the European as well as by the Native, and considered rather a delicacy.

In the more distant districts, such as those of

York and Kent, I have been informed that Elephants have been seen, but I cannot vouch for the fact; yet I do not see what reason there is that this should not be the case. Leopards have been spoken of as numerous and of large size, and as proving frequent depredators on the live stock of goats and sheep. Leopard-skins are amongst the articles of sale in Free-town. They are brought in great numbers with hides and other saleables of a similar kind. But, next to the leopard-skins, some of which are very fine and beautifully marked, those of the little Black Monkey are unrivalled for their matchless quality in the softness and length of the hair. I have never seen any of them alive; yet understand they are of a less obnoxious character in appearance than most of their kind. The skins, which are covered with a thick long black hair of a foot and a half long, are sewn together and make very handsome hearth or carriage rugs. They would not either be unserviceable or unbecoming if converted into muffs. I once saw at King Toms a very uncommon and I should think rare specimen of the kind, which belonged to my Little Friend. It was a skin of a monkey of small size, but with a tail of considerable length; the colours were what formed the attraction in the animal, for they were a clear brown mixed with patches of white,

the latter colour distinctly marking the greater part of the tail. The black monkey skins to which I have just alluded, like most other things, are not to be had for a trifle. African notions of the price of articles are commensurate with their inordinate desire for the coppers and dollars. From four to five dollars is the *reasonable* price asked for them: and yet a naval officer told me he could have procured for me, along the coast, the best samples, as many as I wanted, for the value of a few bottles—a striking difference in native estimate of the value of things, and their rate of charging!

So far as I am able to give any account of the general state and prospect of Trade in Sierra Leone, I should say that with respect to European merchants it has been for some time past on the decline. The time for lucrative speculation has passed away for ever, for the ways and means of accumulating wealth in Sierra Leone such as formerly prevailed, are no longer existing. The indispensable auxiliary of a good capital is a possession not known to the English merchant on the coast; and the outlays and current expenses with which he has to struggle are as formidable as ever. Then Credit is at a miserable per centage, and the immense sacrifices which are unavoidably made by men of business dealing with Natives up

the rivers, through the unlimited confidence they are obliged to place in their agents, and which in too many instances is grossly abused, together with the expensive establishments they are compelled to keep up in their factories, leave it more a matter of chance than calculation, whether they gain any profits or lose everything. Nor are the extravagances of their domestic table more favourable to the realization of wealth. The demand, too, for those articles of merchandize which a few years ago was so great, has ceased to stimulate the adventurer as it was wont to do; and what is more, there is neither the occasion nor the opportunity which at one time existed for that monopoly and abuse in the expenditure of the public, as well as private exchequer, which could not fail of enriching a few at the cost of the majority, and it may with veracity be said, of honesty itself. The rage for immoderate and expensive building, which drained the Colonial Chest, had subsided into a moderation almost partaking of the character of the opposite extreme, until the late Surveyors arrived in the colony, whose practical suggestions, as well as economical regard to the audit, have given a due balance to this important branch of public improvement. The demand for timber has consequently fallen very low, and with it one of the main supports of

mercantile prosperity. Even the dye-wood has not that call for it which it had, and is as I learn deteriorated in price.

An almost insurmountable difficulty in the present day which presents itself to the European merchant, is the *unequal competition* which he is necessitated to encounter in the market. By means of a well-organised combination, the African enterpriser is enabled to command that reduction in the first cost of goods, as well as a greater variety of them, which ready money only can obtain. He retails his stock at moderate, if not reduced prices, and traffics on the principle of immediate payments; and thus irresistibly becomes the monopolist. Then there are on his side the advantages of a less expensive mode of living in the everyday disbursements of his household economy. For although he is not without the ambition of display in the furniture of his home, the style of his dress, and his entertainments, his hospitality is more under the control of self-interest, perhaps prudence, than it is with our own countrymen. And the fact, too, that he is a trader in his own country, and far more competent to contend with the difficulties of climate, particularly when going up the rivers to the factories for purposes of business, where unhealthiness is proverbial, is in his favour, but



decidedly against the emigrating colonists. The method which, as I believe I am correct in stating, they adopt to ensure to themselves such a supply of goods, and so profitable a return, is the establishment of Pecuniary Clubs. These consist of a certain number of persons, who place in one general fund their different deposits, according to their means, with a list of such articles as they particularly and individually require. These sums vary, of course, from fifty to one hundred, two hundred, or larger amounts, and the total frequently averaging from 1,000*l.* to 1,500*l.* The order is then sent home, and at once explains the ground work of that unequal competition of which I have spoken.

The *products* which appear most likely to repay the outlay and labour bestowed upon them, are the *ground nuts* and *coffee*; the former article has already proved a very profitable commodity, and deserved attention has been given to its cultivation. An enterprising merchant of the colony lately tried a new method of working the nut for the extraction of the oil, by means of some machinery sent out from England, which, I believe, succeeded to his satisfaction. The coffee-tree flourishes luxuriantly; and the nut is pronounced, by judges of these things, equal in its aromatic flavour to any produce of the kind. But,

in consequence of its being used too soon, it has a rather bitter taste, which induces those incompetent to give an opinion on the subject, to consider it an inferior article. The land is adapted to its growth, and the sample raised on the plantations of the late Mr. Melville proves both the fitness of the soil for the plant and the quality of the fruit. It is rather surprising that its cultivation has not been more assiduously followed up. Rice, arrow-root of a very fine flavour, palm-oil, peppers, Indian and Guinea corn, are produced abundantly, and without any great effort of husbandry; but *ginger*, I should be inclined to say, is the chief article of the market next to the ground nut. This is easily grown, and in vast quantities, in the neighbouring as well as more remote districts, and brought into Free-town, where it is disposed of for other goods by the natives. It is not equal in size or flavour to the Jamaica root, yet of a very excellent quality, and meriting the attention of the planter.

There is a native product of the soil, which, considering its usefulness and saleableness, has been strangely neglected. It is only in a small way, compared with what it deserves, that the *yam* is cultivated. As an article of consumption it is unspeakably valuable, supplying, as it does, the place of the potato and similar vegetables. In-

deed, when well cooked, it is not much inferior to the Irishman's food. I have been told by a native gentleman, that an acre of ground will yield enough of this vegetable to realize four or five pounds, net value.

But the most interesting and important of all the topics which can be brought before the British public relative to the western coast of Africa, and the colony of Sierra Leone, at the present moment, is the *practicability* of growing *Cotton* on its soil. I wish I could do justice to a subject, engrossing as it does, and not without cause, the anxious attention of our Commercial world, and deserving the closest investigation: I can only offer my humble views and observations upon it. Agitated as the manufacturing interest may well be by fears upon this point, as to the certainty of being able to supply as heretofore the wants of the English market with this valuable and indispensable article, if it would secure to itself a steady and independent as well as full supply of this material, let its immediate and most careful inquiries be directed towards the Coast. There exist to the successful cultivation of it, Facilities which only want the common exertions and skilful experience of industry and practical acquaintance with the proper way of employing them, to obtain a first-rate article and abundance of it. The *nature* of the cotton

plant is such as to require but a *comparatively small proportion of manual labour* to rear it; this is a circumstance peculiarly favourable to the cultivation of it in a climate where much bodily exertion and fatigue could not be expected from the natives. The *soil* itself is *admirably adapted* to the fructification of the plant, and this is proved by the numerous specimens which are to be seen in almost every piece of ground, *spontaneously* and *naturally* growing amongst the other shrubs and trees, and supplying *large* and *well filled* pods of the soft downy substance. The rearing and cultivation of the cotton plant would in my opinion be an acceptable kind of employment to the African labourer; and as the price of wages is not high, and the time occupied in bringing it to perfection by no means slow, the return would plentifully reward the planter as well as the purchaser. The *quality* of the article produced from the cotton plant of Sierra Leone has already been pronounced to be very good, and capable of a durable and yet fine texture.

The extensive portions of land in the neighbourhood of Free-town, and, indeed, throughout the colony, which lie uncultivated, might be employed with advantage in the growth of this article, for which they are in every respect fitted. The Continent of Africa, in fact, throughout is, for the

reasons already offered, well suited to the cultivation of the Cotton plant. Some years ago considerable attention was paid to it, and the undertaking promised every success. A large quantity of it was produced of a very superior quality, and the attempt only failed for want of perseverance, good seed, and a thorough understanding of the proper manner of conducting and carrying it out into practice. The seed of the Native plant was not supposed to be so good as that which was imported, and for this reason the undertaking was prematurely but foolishly relinquished. The Natives themselves, particularly as you advance more into the interior and up the Gambia, grow a good deal of it, and make very capital cloths for their own use from the material, which they work after their own fashion. The opportunities afforded for the cultivation of cotton in the vast tracts of land bounding that river, and the readiness, I imagine, with which it would be undertaken and carried on by their possessors if a fair inducement was held out to them, ought not to be passed over by our Manufacturers at the present crisis.

In my ramblings up the Gambia I had many opportunities of observing how the people of the country worked the cotton in the raw material for their own use, and to what degree of perfection they could bring it. The article in its

natural state is first cleared and prepared for a very simple process, by which they obtain the thread in a manner similar to that practised by our old women in the use of the spinning-wheel. The native weaver places himself in a hole in the ground, deep enough for him to bend his knees so as to sit upon the edge of it. Four sticks are put up at several yards length, two at each end about a foot apart, directly opposite to the workman and at a little distance from him. Around these sticks the cotton is worked by a quick rotatory motion in order to be formed into the thread, which the weaver winds off on a most unartificial instrument of wood, something like a little canoe, along the inside of which runs a small polished stick, and revolves by means of passing loosely through two holes at each extremity. The cotton when cleared was very soft and white; and the thread in its first stage of spinning had a woolly appearance, and was about the size of our English bobbin.

Not only, however, in a mercantile point of view, as placing *our* cotton trade on a basis of independence and prosperity, does the cultivation of the plant in Africa, especially the Western coast and colony of Sierra Leone, merit immediate and energetic endeavours to give it its first moving impulse. The benefits accruing to the culti-

vators of it and to the African community at large would be immense, not merely as a means of lucrative employment and increase of native wealth, but as a very powerful agency in promoting that disposition for trade—and trade, moreover, such as from its character would tend materially to give them a zest for trading and mercantile pursuits—and thus gradually and effectually open their eyes to see their own advantage in occupying themselves in the use of those rich resources of commerce with which their country abounds.

Nor are these the only important consequences likely to arise out of a judicious and spirited attention to this subject. The results of the successful cultivation of Cotton on the coast would most probably extend beyond even the calculations of profits and loss. These would, there is reason to hope, conduce as much, if not more, than anything hitherto attempted, to do away with the Slave Trade, by removing the prevailing inducements to carry it on. The chiefs and those who are now most active in supplying its demands would not want the temptations which are at present held out to them to continue their wicked and inhuman traffic. They would soon discover that their personal and local interest depended upon reversing their old ways and preserving to themselves the labour of their people instead of selling

it. They would not be long in perceiving the fearful error they had so long committed, of pursuing a cruel and depopulating occupation, which, after all, but poorly repaid them when counter-balanced by the sacrifices which the rational and lucrative employment of lawful trade and commerce would soon make manifest. An effectual barrier would at once be raised against the prosecution of the Slave-trade from without, immediately the Cultivation of Cotton should have become a National and Universal means of acquiring wealth in Africa, and thus utterly nullify the necessity of the Slave-trade receiving any encouragement from inland agency. The mutual associations, interests, and combinations, which the supply of cotton from the Coast would also originate and call forth into action, could not fail of morally and physically securing protection to the persons of the natives from any Foreign aggression. For the interests of commerce and trade would then be so intricately involved in the question, that it would be no longer possible for any international policy to suffer on any terms the continuance of an iniquitous system, which must prove detrimental to them. And, moreover, when once experimentally and substantially acquainted with the superior and certain advantages of an extensive cultivation of the cotton immediately in a pecu-



niary, as well as consecutively in a variety of other ways, the Chiefs and all their people would have the common sense to see that it would be to their gain to discountenance by every forcible and active measure, a System opposed to so practicable a way of enriching themselves, and at the same time preserving their own Independence.

## CHAPTER V.

LEAVE FREE-TOWN FOR THE GAMBIA.—APPEARANCE OF SAINT MARY'S, BATHURST, FROM THE RIVER, ON APPROACHING IT: THE STYLE OF BUILDINGS AND PRINCIPAL HOUSES.—RECOGNITION OF AN OLD FRIEND IN A RED COAT.—REFLECTIONS.—LANDING-PLACE.—DEATH OF THE CHAPLAIN: GREAT WANT OF CHURCH ACCOMMODATION: DESIRE AND EFFORTS OF INHABITANTS TO BUILD A CHURCH UNSUCCESSFUL: NO CHURCH MISSIONARIES: BURIAL-GROUND.—GARRISON SCHOOL.—PRISON: PUNISHMENTS: REFLECTIONS.—TOWER OF DEFENCE.—ATTEMPTS TO DRAIN.—EXPERIMENTAL ENDEAVOURS TO EXTRACT SPIRIT FROM PALM WINE.—PREPARATIONS FOR DEPARTURE FROM SAINT MARY'S FOR M'CARTHY'S ISLAND.

I do not consider it a mere matter of taste or inclination, that a person should, according to his opportunities, make himself acquainted with whatever is desirable to be known of the localities and other subjects of useful interest in the country where he is stationed. To me it seems a duty, and one of no ordinary responsibility, to be as conversant as we can be with things around us, that we may not only increase our stock of general knowledge for our own satisfaction, but also impart it to others for the general good. It was

this feeling which induced me to solicit permission of the Governor to accompany a gentleman who was returning from Free-town to the Gambia, in order that I might see that part of the coast. This his Excellency very kindly permitted, on condition that my professional duties were fulfilled. Accordingly, I took my berth in a vessel belonging to a person already introduced to my reader in these pages by the name of Captain Ebenezer Playwell.

After an agreeable passage of a few days we came in sight of St. Mary's, Bathurst, the first and most important settlement on the river Gambia. The general aspect of St. Mary's will bear no comparison with that of Free-town and its surrounding scenery. Bathurst presents one unbroken and unvaried flat of sand, with extensive swamps and bush, as you advance into the interior. Yet, although there is nothing to relieve the eye from the most disagreeable of all prospects, a barren and extensive plain, there is nevertheless something in the appearance of the town, as approached from the entrance of the river, which fixes the attention of a person who has not seen it before. Like Free-town and M'Carthy's island, of which I shall speak as we proceed, it is built on the line of coast bordering close upon the sea-shore, and reminds you of some of our small bathing

places. The houses in structure and durability are very superior to those of Free-town, both in external style and internal convenience and elegance. They more closely resemble the London edifices, and, reflected upon by the sun's rays, remind you of the haunts of men when seen afar off, out at sea,—white and glistening, and seeming to be what they are not—the residences of independence and rank. To the westward is as fine a beach as pedestrian or horseman could desire; and were it not for the depth of sand through which you have to drag yourself in getting to it, a carriage and four might be driven up and down it with ease and safety. In this direction is to be seen the Barracks, Government-house, Hospital, and Burial ground, objects which at once arrest your notice on approaching St. Mary's. That part of the town which lies up the river terminates abruptly and without offering any object of particular interest. On the other side of the river is Fort Bullen, a small compact fortification occupied by a portion of the troops stationed at Bathurst, about an hour's row across the water.

The worthy captain had scarcely dropped his anchor, than greetings and recognitions left us little time for anything else than to return salutes. The gentleman who was my companion and an

official in the Government service, had generously invited me to share the accommodations of his house, and I landed intending to avail myself of his goodwill. I had not proceeded, however, many steps, when to my great delight I recognized on horseback a Red-coat, to whom years of intimacy and many proofs of friendship in the Bahamas, had closely attached me. Another officer, his adjutant as I afterwards ascertained, was with him. This could not deter me from making up to my friend at once; and accordingly I advanced very stealthily and quietly up to him, and, giving him a hearty slap on the thigh, cried out a salute of auld acquaintance, at the same time challenging his recollection by name. As might be expected, his surprise to see his old chaplain after several years by his side in so unlooked for a manner was proved by a start from his seat; hands were, however, soon clasped together; and after an introduction to his adjutant (for he commanded the garrison), he most uncereemoniously made me his prisoner during my stay at Bathurst, and forcing me away from my first patron, paraded me through the sand to his quarters.

If there is an hour of happiness which may be envied, it is to be suddenly thrown together in this way, friend with friend, after years of separation. The heart can with difficulty find an

interpreter of its sensations. It pants to express, as well as reciprocate its congratulations and pleasurable emotions. Involuntarily, again and again, hand holds hand, and the familiar assurance: "I'm glad to see you,—who would have thought it?" is repeated until you can do no more than look at one another.

It was to me, I must own, one of those few events in my chequered life, to which I can revert with unalloyed satisfaction; for, independent of the gratification of once more meeting a tried friend and most gentlemanly and high-minded officer, I again found myself amongst other officers whom I had every cause to respect, and identified many of the soldiers and non-commissioned officers formerly at Nassau under my care, who welcomed me with a sincerity which could not be mistaken. Some of these who, years ago, were in the ranks, had now marks on their shoulders, the rewards of improvement derived from instruction in the Garrison school at New Providence. Men who at that time knew not a letter I saw reading their books, and found employed in useful penmanship, an undeniable proof of the advantage every way derived by the Service from educating the troops.

My first evening, which was passed in company with the Commandant at the house of Mr. Brown,

one of the merchants of the place, was very agreeable. I could have brought myself to believe it was a London drawing-room in which I was enjoying my tea and coffee and the agreeable society about me. Everything looked and felt so English. Those who were fond of cards played at them; others chatted; some smoked their cigars in the piazza; cake and wine were continually handed about, or left for you to partake of as inclination prompted; until about nine o'clock, when the table was laid for supper, which was profusely covered with substantial and delicacies. But, I believe, no one partook of the pleasures of the evening more heartily than did the Commandant and myself, who found ourselves thus thrown together in such an unexpected manner.

The town of Saint Mary's, Bathurst, is divided into two principal streets, the upper, and lower, or that which runs parallel with the beach. These are intersected by others; and it is no easy task to traverse them on foot, as the roads in every part of the town consist of loose deep sand. In fact very few persons use their legs for walking purposes, but throw them across a quadruped as a much easier mode of moving about. In the rainy season, Saint Mary's must be a most unenviable spot beyond the threshold of the comfortable houses of the merchants, who appear to spare no expense

or trouble to make them desirable residences. In unhealthiness it is impossible that this or any other part of the coast can surpass Sierra Leone. The wharf or landing place, by which you transfer yourself from the vessel to the shore, is a miserable affair, being nothing better than some piles of wood driven into the sand and planks laid upon them. Bathurst deserves a better pier than this. There are a few trees growing in front of the houses in the main street; but the other parts of the town are bare and destitute of fruit-trees and any other verdure worth mentioning. You see everything of Saint Mary's on entering the river and walking a little distance after landing, on the sands.

During our passage from Sierra Leone to the Gambia, I had made some inquiries relative to the state and ministry of the Church at Saint Mary's, which I learnt was far from being satisfactory. On our arrival, the first piece of news we heard was that the colonial chaplain, poor Mr. Rankin, had lately died; but not from fever or effects of climate. His death was hastened by one of those distressing accidents permitted by the Wise Disposer of events, and which are doubtless intended to teach thoughtless man how precarious and unsubstantial are the possessions of this world—talents, riches, and life itself! This melancholy intelligence in-



duced me to volunteer my gratuitous services to the garrison and colony as temporary chaplain during my stay at St. Mary's, which the Commandant and Governor were pleased to accept.

Not only, however, did I find Bathurst destitute of a minister of the Establishment, but also without a Church, a deficiency for which it is difficult to account, except we attribute it to that mournful supineness and unconcern about religious concerns which governs communities sometimes, as well as individuals. This I do not believe is the case with the inhabitants of St. Mary's; for if I may be allowed to come to any conclusion on this point, I shall not hesitate to say from what my short experience of them taught me, they are most anxious, and have been so for years, to build a House of Worship. The attempt was made some time back; and the merchants and principal persons of the settlement came forward in a very spirited manner, and would have been liberally backed by their friends in England, if those who ought to have been most zealous and energetic in promoting and conducting so good a work, had not suffered the undertaking to die a natural death. Several names were put down for very considerable sums for the purpose; and even whilst I was resident amongst them, I experienced the most convincing proofs of their attachment to the

Established Church of England, and desire to get so important an object accomplished. That a population so large and respectable, so desirous of enjoying the religious benefits of divine worship according to the rites of our formulary in a proper and becoming manner, but which is not practicable without a suitable building erected and set apart, should remain deprived of such a right is a sad reflection on those with whom rests the power of giving it to them. Nor do I think that, if the wants of the people of Bathurst were represented as they ought to be to the Christian public in England and the Heads of our church, munificence would cease to flow from the rich fountain of so many supplies, which has already proved such a mighty help to causes of the same nature, in their behalf.

And, further, it is not always, or with any degree of regularity, that even the benefits of a duly ordained minister can be depended upon; for he is not exempt from the casualties of an unhealthy climate, and there is no Church Missionary either there or at M'Carthy's Island. As a churchman I must beg respectfully to express some surprise that our Missionary societies connected with the Church have never directed their attention to this quarter of Africa, and that such an extent of territory, colonized as it is by British subjects as

well as Natives, should have remained so long without any Church ministry. The Wesleyan Mission society is not so listless; chapels and schools are rewarding the exertions which it has made in the cause of Christianity; and its ministers, it is only justice to say so, are continually supplied to St. Mary's and M'Carthy's, whose instructions are not without evident blessings. Indeed, but for them in a great measure, Christianity would not smile as it does on that portion of western Africa.

The place where divine worship was held, when I visited St. Mary's, was a building formerly used for a mess establishment of the garrison, being nothing more than one large room, merely parted off from the passage entrance, and standing close to the beach, near the Powder magazine. So long as I remained at Bathurst, Divine service was performed there by me, every Sunday morning at the usual hour, and was respectably attended. Psalmody we could not accomplish; but in all other particulars the service was correctly and duly observed. I officiated to the garrison, in barracks, before breakfast, for they were only a stone's cast from the Commandant's quarters; and to a more attentive well-conducted congregation I never ministered. There were many amongst them whom I had known in the Bahamas, whom I might fairly say I had educated and christian-

ized. Some of them I had either married or baptized; fathers, mothers, husbands, and wives, with their children were of the number. For such persons, under such circumstances, I could write no discourse; I spoke to them, as to my friends, the truths of Revelation, and the duties of Morality; and if external behaviour promises anything certain, I do not think I addressed them in vain.

Immediately it was known that I had undertaken the chaplaincy duties, applications for the rite of Baptism, and candidates for the Holy Communion, were unceasing. The quarters of my friend, where I was stopping, were literally besieged by persons of all ages and both sexes. I soon found it necessary to adopt some regulations for receiving and examining as well as exhorting them. Restrictions, too, in admitting the candidates, became absolutely compulsory. These, however, were few compared with the many whom I did not feel myself justified to refuse, and I was fully and delightfully engaged throughout the week, as well as on Sunday, in the duties of my office.

I have spoken of the burial-ground at Free-town. That at St. Mary's, Bathurst, is still worse. But for the tomb-stones which are irregularly scattered about on the sand and in the bush, no

one would suppose it was a spot set apart for the interment of the dead. Some of these are, it is true, enclosed with iron railings, but many of them are so far down upon the sea-shore, that it frequently happens that the bodies and coffins are washed out of their graves. A most distressing circumstance of this nature once occurred which cannot be particularized. Why do not the authorities make it their business and duty to have a proper church-yard secured and fenced in, so as to prevent the recurrence of what must shock every Christian mind? In officiating at the funeral of one of the soldiers, while at St. Mary's, I remarked that from the depth and looseness of the sand it was impossible to dig anything in the form of a grave; it was, therefore, nothing more than a hole into which the poor fellow was lowered.

I am not aware that the same practice prevails in Sierra Leone; but, at the Gambia, the death and burial of a person, as I once had an opportunity of observing, were thus solemnized:—The body was laid out in the yard and covered with a clean white linen sheet, and there left under the superintendence of some of the friends or attendants until finally removed. A whole bullock was then brought to the house, or rather the hut of the deceased, and disposed of by the numerous persons invited to partake of it. Howlings and

wailings, with incessant thumpings of Tom-toms, and every kind of horrible noise, were then continued, to our excessive annoyance; for the Mourners were near neighbours. At last the Commandant was obliged to warn them to desist, and we were relieved from the nuisance.

Whilst at St. Mary's I regularly visited the school of the garrison; but I am sorry I cannot speak in its praise. There were very few young people there, and I did not observe more than two or three adults. Their Christian knowledge was also sadly short of what I have found the general standard to be.

The Prison, which is in the Military Square and on a line with the school, cannot be mentioned as deserving any praise for its construction, but as reflecting severely upon the policy and humanity which could tolerate it for a place of confinement for rational beings. The smallness of the building, the want of ventilation and roominess in the yard, the wretched accommodation for debtors, and the impracticability, owing to the little space within the Gaol, of sufficiently separating and classifying prisoners according to the nature of their offences and their position, as convicted, or untried offenders, precludes the possibility of thinking of it without pain. No form of cruelty, not so much as the appearance or suspicion of it,

should mark or be ascribed to prison confinement or correction. The Penal Code of a Christian and enlightened country may, with perfect safety to the ends of justice and undiminished effect, as a means of suppressing vice and crime and reforming human licentiousness, be divested of much of its rigorous and harsh treatment. The purpose of all punishment is to correct, and not to irritate; to reform, and not to drive to despair; to improve, and not to harden by injudicious association. The tendency of any deficiency in the proper arrangements and construction of prisons, or in any of their departments, must unavoidably produce, however, these evils, one or more of them, in a greater or less degree. Some attention to the improvements of the gaol at Bathurst would be wisely bestowed, and it is no more than what is really demanded. Executions, I believe, are sights seldom witnessed at St. Mary's. A few years ago it was considered advisable to let the law take its course, in a most aggravated case of crime; but the capital punishment was remitted almost at the instant it was about to be inflicted. No public sympathy was manifested towards the atrocious miscreant, who had most justly provoked his doom, except by a few weak persons, whose feelings, and not their senses of right and wrong, led them to obtain a mitigation of the sentence. Flogging is

in use at the Gambia for stealing, which prevails there as much as in Sierra Leone; and the punishment has been salutary in repressing theft. It is administered, from all I could learn, as leniently as justice will admit: but it ill-becomes a Master or Accuser, who makes any pretensions to the sentiments and feelings of a man, to indulge his curiosity and spleen, by himself witnessing the chastisement of his own servant whom he has procured to be convicted. This looks like malice and revenge; and if people incline to this opinion, in such a case, they have a reasonable cause for doing so.

At a little distance out of the town, and erected as I was informed for overawing the natives should they manifest any disposition to commit acts of aggression on the settlement—an event not at all improbable but for this check—stands a large and lofty circular tower, mounted with cannon. It is well built, and a pleasing relief, as an object, to the unvarying flatness of the country around it.

Some attempts were making, on a large scale and with much spirit, to drain and embank out a large body of water from the main land not far from the town, which would, if accomplished, open an easier communication with the country, and promote the healthfulness of the place; but



the opinion of many appeared to be that its success was very doubtful and hardly worth the outlay which it would require.

A more feasible experiment was in operation, and certainly more interesting, although I doubt if with a better prospect of success, and it was an attempt to distil a spirit from the Palm wine, which is brought in large quantities from the interior of St. Mary's. The gentleman who was engaged in it had but one reason for doubting whether it would repay the cost and trouble incurred in the undertaking, which was the want of a sufficient supply of the wine. The spirit, he said, already produced, was very good and powerful. As an experiment, it may be very well; but we do not require any further addition to the stimulants, which are found to be quite answerable to the purpose of destroying thousands of souls and bodies. He was, however, completely engrossed with his novel occupation; and it was something, I must own, out of the common way, to see the counterpart of one of our brewers' tall round chimneys uprearing itself in such an outlandish part of the world as the Gambia, into the heavens, and pouring forth its clouds of black smoke!

Whilst intent, one morning, in looking at this not insignificant proof of human art and in-

dustry, and the advancement which is making in Africa in the arts of procuring the luxuries as well as necessities of life, I was gently tapped on the shoulder by my good friend, the Commandant, who, with the delight of one who knew he would be imparting a pleasure in what he was going to communicate, informed me there was an expedition up the Gambia contemplated, in which he would have to bear a prominent part, and proposed my accompanying him. It was too charming an offer to hesitate a moment in accepting; and accordingly we started off to Government House, paid our respects to his Excellency, and having obtained his ready consent to my joining the party, set about putting up such things as we thought necessary for the occasion, storing ourselves also with plenty of Colars—to propitiate the Chiefs and good folk of the interior, or purchase some of their curiosities; cigars, fowling-pieces and ammunition, magazines and newspapers. All these indispensable preliminaries being settled and arranged, we passed the remainder of the afternoon in anticipating the wonders and novelties which our fancies created amongst the Wilds and the Wild ones we were going to visit.

## CHAPTER VI.

DEPARTURE FROM ST. MARY'S. — STATE OF THE VESSEL. —  
 DELAY. — REFLECTION. — OBSERVATIONS ON MINISTERIAL CON-  
 DUCT IN TRAVELLING. — NARRATIVE RESUMED. — SAINT JAMES'S  
 ISLAND. — CURIOUS DISTINCTIONS. — REMARKS. — PROSPECTS OF  
 TRADE, AND MEANS OF EXTENDING IT. — EXTENT OF GO-  
 VERNMENT PROTECTION ON THE RIVER. — ALBRADA. — MAN-  
 GROVES. — TONTROWAL. — CURIOUS CANOES, AND SURPRISE OF  
 NATIVES AT THE STEAMER. — LANDSCAPE. — BIRDS. — TENDER-  
 BAR. — SINGULAR METHOD OF EXPELLING THE INHABITANTS.  
 — PROLIFICNESS OF NATURE. — TIMBER TREES. — GAME. —  
 CLOSE OF THE DAY.

WHENEVER expectation is on the "tiptoe" it is unreasonable to hope for sleep. It is not the schoolboy alone, but also the man of years and experience in the School of Life, who knows what that waking watchfulness is which precedes a morning that is to realize what he has been anticipating with eager desire. This was my case the night before our intended expedition up the Gambia. But the sun rising and the bugle sounding, all arose; the breakfast was soon despatched, and very soon I had the pleasure of being on board the *Albert*, a Government steamer, in the company of

seven worthy and agreeable gentlemen. This vessel, immortalized as one of the ill-fated three which were employed in the unfortunate expedition up the Niger, was stationed at St. Mary's for colonial and mercantile purposes. But it was in every way most unsuited to the objects for which it was intended, as subsequent occurrences too plainly proved. Notwithstanding an annual allowance of *two thousand pounds* per annum granted to keep this wretched memorial of a still more wretched expedition in a serviceable state for public use, it was a specimen of abominable dirt and neglect. Its uncleanly appearance, in spite of a good deal of hard preparatory rubbing and scrubbing, but more particularly the bad state of repair in which it was, astonished every one. Our party, however, having all assembled together, consisting of a Naturalist, a small part of the Commissariat Department, a towering Irish Adjutant, two worthy Merchants, and your humble servant, the anchor was weighed, and the thick clouds of smoke oozing out of the ugly and badly ornamented chimney, gave signs not to be mistaken, that we were fairly on the start.

But, to our dismay, the engineer, looking as black as his vessel, brought us the unwelcome tidings that one of the boilers had burst! And, as if to console us for this agreeable piece of intelligence, he added, that it was not the first time this

had happened within the last twenty-four hours. Submission was our only alternative; and really I must be guilty for once of a little self-praise and say that we showed a wonderful degree of patience, which was only overcome at intervals by our looks and expressions of fear and doubt lest the expedition should fail in the onset. The Governor himself betrayed some alarm (conscious or not of the state of the steamer I cannot say) at our delay, and sent off boats from the wharf to learn the cause of it. At last, after a torturing suspense of several hours, we made another and more fortunate move, and were all of us soon in good humour.

As we slowly moved from our station, I stood on the deck watching the shore and its white buildings from which we were almost imperceptibly receding; nor could I help dwelling on the singular circumstances which brought me to the Gambia. It was an incident as fortunate to me as it was extraordinary in itself. Probably, I gave it more importance than it deserved; but the strongest minds are often weak on these matters. Still it was remarkable that the *Delaware* in which I came to the Gambia, although a headwind was against us the whole of the way from Sierra Leone, should have arrived so *apropos* as to give me the opportunity of meeting with my old friend before he left St. Mary's, and also of accompanying him up the river.

#### MINISTERIAL CONDUCT IN TRAVELLING. 93

I was much gratified to find that even on an occasion such as the present, of excitement and pleasure, attention to the duties of "saying grace" before and after dinner was not omitted by my worthy friends of the Gambia. I was not only regularly called upon to perform these offices, but my proposal to read prayers on Sunday was most readily received, and Divine Service attended to respectfully by the soldiers as well as the passengers and men of the vessel, without any exception. It may be well to mention this, because I have witnessed so many injurious effects to Religion in all its branches from a forward and imprudent zeal—"a zeal," which may truly be said to be "without knowledge." If ministers will indiscreetly and out of season seek to compel persons by intrusive liberties and forwardness to the observance of religious obligations, regardless of circumstances, time or place, they may depend upon it, they will do much more harm than good. In all my ministerial experience, and particularly that which I have seen in foreign service for the last ten years, I have ever found it wise and politic to adopt one invariable rule of conduct, (whatever others might think or do,) and that was never to attempt an ill-timed, officious, and unwelcome enforcement of religious rites or duties on those with whom I might be travelling or otherwise brought in contact.

Always ready to perform them when required to do so in public, and attentive to them, I hope, although without ostentation, in my own private walk of life, I have, regardless of what others might surmise, preferred to anticipate a request to officiate than to make one, convinced that offence, nine times out of ten, will be given by forwardness and intrusion. I am persuaded that the unassuming, modest clergyman, who is consistent in his own behaviour, without too much of the stiff professionalist, will rarely have to complain of either want of respectful deference to himself, or neglect in others to solicit his performance of those duties which so deeply concern us all. A little discretion, with a careful observance of the characters, habits, opinions and tempers of those into whose society he may be thrown, will always enable a clergyman to act in so serious and difficult a matter without compromising his own feelings, conscience, or dignity, or doing violence to those with whom he is associated. To attempt to *force* religion on persons, as unwilling it may be in disposition as in principles to embrace it or be governed by its precepts, is worse than folly. What does not provoke may leave room for future consent to adopt, and follow after as right and good, and perhaps awaken a desire for that, which otherwise would be altogether despised and rejected.

But to resume the main thread of my narrative. The day after our departure from Saint Mary's we came in sight of Saint James's, a small island nearly central in its locality on the river, between Jilfree and Sicca, and the opposite side of the land. The former of these places is a small native village, with two stone houses and factories; the latter is a large native town, inland, having two English establishments of the same kind. The distance from point to point is but a few miles across. On Saint James's island are observable the ruins of a fort, formerly of considerable importance and use when the slave trade was flourishing, and before the intellectual and moral efforts of the great friends of African Emancipation prepared the way for the abolition of so iniquitous a traffic. There was something strikingly romantic in this drear and isolated spot; something in its loneliness and character which invested it with an appearance of what you would call melancholy — perhaps, fearful. And then the associations of the past, imaginary yet as controlling as if real, and giving rise to ideas of deeds of violence and cruelty, threw around it a spell capable of being embodied into the substance of many a fearful tale and deed of sanguinary lawlessness!

Projecting almost to a point, and terminating



suddenly on one side whilst it gradually rose on the other, bordered with bush and wood, it assumed to us as we passed by it, something of the figure of a triangle. The remains of the old fort rose mournfully above the tops of the trees, which nearly concealed it in their dark shade. There was another building close to it, in which I was told the unhappy slaves were imprisoned. This partook of the true character of hopeless neglect and dilapidation ; and indistinctly peeping through the leafy concealment in which it was embosomed, raised up in the mind sad and strange ideas of what that lone spot could disclose to ear and eye, if the deeds of bye-gone days were chronicled on the Living Page of Truth ! And, doubtless, the place, from its position, its distance from any large community, its nearness to the land on each side, was well adapted to the purposes of any illicit traffic or the practices of any inhuman rites ! At one time there were stationed at this island a sergeant and about twenty men, but they were finally removed in 1829 or 1830. They were obliged to obtain fresh water from the main land when on duty there, for none was to be had on the spot. Some tanks and guns, one of which is said to be still in a state fit for use, are left on the island. Of late years, it is said the water has gained considerably upon it and reduced its size ;

most likely in the lapse of a very few years it will disappear entirely. As we again passed it on our return we obtained a much better sight of it, and could distinguish the sand beach very plainly with other objects, but no inhabitant. At the time that the Slave Trade was carried on here, and which, I understand, was a business of immense profit, a curious distinction was made in the names given to the various goods which were bartered and passed backward and forward at this part of the coast. *Slaves* were recognized by the singular appellation of *Dry Goods*, whilst other articles and commodities receive the opposite name of *Wet Goods*. Europeans more frequently resorted to this part of the country formerly than at present. Merchant-vessels were signalled from the Fort by the classification of some old native terms in use to distinguish them, I believe, from more suspicious craft.

Rumours of an intention to station a Custom-house Officer on this island were abroad at the time of our visit to the river, and the utility of such a measure seemed to be regarded as desirable. The general opinion so far as I could ascertain it on this subject was, that it would be the only sure method of putting an end to the illegal trade which was carried on by the French at Albreda, by means of native agency in *all parts* of the

*river* ; whereas by *Treaty* they have only, in strict observance of its articles, a right to *three hundred* by *four hundred yards* of territory.

It is certain that if there was more intercourse encouraged up this fine and noble stream ; if settlements were established, good will encouraged, and a protective force of regulars or volunteers supplied as far as the Falls which lie beyond M'Carthy's Island, a communication would thus be opened into the interior, which is at present scarcely known and not altogether safe to traverse. Civilization and Christianity would follow as natural consequences ; for trade and commerce would become increasing subjects of interest to the natives, and be more valued and pursued as they were better understood. Hitherto prejudices of climate, the fears of fever, and the risk to personal security, have, without question, left to our Gallic friends the almost exclusive power of colonizing this part of Africa. Competition does not seem, in this instance, to enter into the thoughts of John Bull. Let us hope that calm and dispassionate inquiry, supported by the knowledge and judgment of our merchants and professional men, who either live at the settlements on this river and are thereby able to acquaint themselves with the true state of things, or are frequently enabled to personally inquire into them by their repeated visits for the

purposes of business, will soon convince our countrymen that the resources of these parts of the Continent are yet to be discovered in their true value and extent. Now, merchants or any one besides venturing upwards beyond M'Carthy's Island, cannot do so without danger to property and person. The French, if I do not write erroneously, reverse this policy, and afford, most wisely, every facility and protection to traders of their nation who are disposed to speculate in any part of the river-territory.

Albrada offers to the traveller in its localities and along its river boundaries, an outline and character of country which is not very irregular, but woody. The tints and colourings of foliage which the trees display have not much variety or depth in them. Occasional elevations of land relieve the flatness of the champaign, and there is some bold scenery in the foreground. The banks of the river here are covered principally with the mangrove, which grows to a considerable height, supplies sticks useful for light purposes, and possesses one distinctive and curious character—its roots rise out of the ground to the height of several feet from the soil, and twine and intertwine with singular flexibility, forming interstices which extend all along the banks. It is no favourite, however, on account of the difficulty it offers to

making a way through it, from its entangling the feet, and the swampy muddy bed where it is chiefly found. The bodies of these trees taper and are like our Birch in colour and shape, which they resemble also in the leaf. About this place were some very lofty Palmettos and magnificent Cedar trees, which mingling one with the other made a pleasing change.

The Reaches, which point and terminate the numerous groups of beautiful islets scattered about this river, and which form the bays and creeks of it, are remarkably abrupt and defined. They are clothed to the water's edge with luxuriant verdure, and exhibit to the greatest advantage the matchless drapery of their variegated trees and shrubs, so unlike any thing else of the kind I have ever seen.

Albrada is a French Contoir, consisting of five Factories, and mustering not more than about fifty men. It has, also, a small English establishment of the same description. The native village contains three thousand persons, including children; but no Missionary of any denomination has yet preached the glad tidings of Salvation to this heathen spot! The chief articles of trade are Ground Nuts, which are exchanged for a variety of goods selected to please the odd taste of these people. The Mandingo race predominate here, and their

religion is Mahometan. Their huts are, for the most part, conical in shape, consist of one room on the ground-floor, have one entrance, and are built and strongly fenced in with the cane, and thatched with the grass of the country. Their peculiarities are much the same in manner and habits of life as the rest of their countrymen. The huts display African taste and simplicity in their construction, and some of them are very neatly put together.

The next spot of Native industry and society we came to was called Tontrowal; but it scarcely merits mention as a place with a "local habitation and a name." The shore opposite to it appeared sandy; and a few canoes with their dark owners were the only objects we saw here, except two very long canoes lashed together and literally crammed with Ham's progeny, who were paddling away with a precision, regularity, and at a speed worthy an oar of the Thames in a rowing-match. They graciously returned our salute and greeting, which they spoke in their own language, and were evidently astonished at our mode of voyaging. Resting frequently on their paddles, they would take a most philosophical look at us, raise a shout of admiration, but not dare to venture too close to such an inexplicable visitor as a Steamer!

A group of tall Palmettos, of unusual height and fine growth, ornamented the landscape in this



part. These elegant trees, rearing aloft their bare, knotty trunks, and gracefully bending backwards and forwards their feathering leaves in the unclouded sky, looked like an infant colony of strangers in an unknown land, as they rose from among the dark mass of wood and bush which enclosed them! Here we were gratified with the sight of some magnificent birds of the Crane species. Numbers of them were gracefully stalking over the bright arid sand, on which human foot could not have trod without pain or inconvenience. Many were gliding just above the surface of the water with poised and seemingly unmoving pinion, their long arched necks and full-fledged downy breasts of spotless white shone in the sun, and their shadows followed them in the stream beneath. The heat to-day was intolerable. We had not a thermometer: but some of our party supposed it could not have stood at less than  $115^{\circ}$  or  $120^{\circ}$  in the shade! Parts of the country here were entirely destitute of vegetation, being parched by the fierceness of the sun.

On the right side of the river, and a few miles further up, is Tenderbar, consisting of some huts. It was, once, the principal Factory in this part, but has now dwindled into third-rate consequence. To this place belongs a curious fact, and it is perfectly true. Its inhabitants have been twice driven

from it by force, and compelled to abandon it to an enemy of a description which will surprise my reader. If not as savage and vindictive as their black and more rational neighbours, yet they proved themselves equal in destructiveness and power. These disturbers of the public peace, to whom the villagers were indebted for their temporary expulsion from their homes, were *Monkeys* ! These creatures are well known to be no mean opponents in a hard fight, and will battle furiously to the injury of limb and life. They are distinguished by the name of Dog-monkeys, from their being similar to the canine species in the noise they make, which sounds like the barking of that animal. These disagreeable and troublesome creatures grow to a large size, and are very strong in their limbs. We observed clouds of smoke rising from the rear of the Mangroves, which we were informed were fires caused by the burning of the bush and high grass, the common plan of preparing and enriching the soil for the sowing their rice and corn. In this agricultural pursuit little more is requisite than to drop the seed into the ground ; Nature, prolific and favourable to the production of her peculiar grain, yields the Native an abundance of simple yet nutritive food. In truth, she does more for us all ; and it only needs the bold step of enterprise and the hand of steady industry





to profit largely by her beneficence. Hence, from these sultry plains, almost unknown; hence from these woods, yet unexplored, are brought Gold and Ivory, the fragrant Cedar and the African Oak, which for closeness of its grain and durability, vies with the sturdy monarch of our English parks and forests! Here, too, the firm and invaluable Mahogany flourishes in the heat of a burning sun and sends forth its noble branches. Cattle are reared here in great numbers, game is plentiful, milk and palm-wine are always to be procured, goats are skipping about in all directions. You may pick up a very decent nag; and with a keen eye and steady hand, if not too aristocratic to eat your own vension, you may provide for your dinner something better than ordinary without feeing the gamekeeper or voting for his master.

We now anchored off a place called the "Devil's Point," tired with our several pursuits; and after undergoing a good washing, we sat down like men who had done hard work, prepared to do justice to the dinner which our caterers had provided. The sparkling Moselle quickened our spirits, and we recounted to each other the adventures of the day, until the hour reminded us that it was time to get to our berths, where we soon and gladly settled ourselves.

## CHAPTER VII.

OPENING REFLECTIONS.—DEVIL'S POINT.—SUPERSTITIOUS NOTIONS OF THE NATIVES ABOUT IT.—SCENERY.—EFFECT OF BIRDS IN CONTRAST WITH THE COLOURING OF IT.—WIDTH OF RIVER.—ISLETS.—ELEPHANT ISLAND; CREEK.—COMER; IMPORTANCE, POPULATION, TRIBE AND RELIGION OF IT.—WHAT EFFORTS TO INTRODUCE CHRISTIANITY.—NIGHT AND PASSING REFLECTIONS.—DELAY.—YAANAMAROO; VISIT TO ITS SHORE.—GAME; BIRDS; WOODLAND; CULTIVATION, AND CAUSE OF ITS BACKWARDNESS.—SHELTER FOR GAME.

It is by those only who have lived in tropical regions and whose lot has been to feel the overpowering heat by day and sultry closeness at night, with all the other recommendations of sand-flies, mosquitoes, and numberless teasers, which assist to put you into the fidgets and drive from your bed in spite of every precaution “Nature’s soft nurse,” that the return of morn can be fully enjoyed. In every quarter of the globe, it is true, the reviving freshness of that part of time when the faint tinges of light streak softly the mellow distance of the landscape, and from the dewy grass the bird springs upward from his rest, or takes his flight from the bending bough to carol

in the sky or seek its early food, is perhaps known and valued alike by all who rise early. But it is at sea, on the broad glassy lake, or on the rippling waters of some noble river of a Western or African clime, that morning is seen to break forth upon the face of slumbering Nature in all its splendour, and its reviving coolness truly relished.

And so it did on us, as we lay quietly cabled off the Devil's Point; and most acceptably did we welcome the fresh air, as, strolling up and down the quarter-deck, we took our coffee or smoked a cigar, watching the glorious sun as he rose from behind the high bush, gradually warming and lighting into animation and activity Creation's various beings. This place is so called from some superstitious reason, not, I believe, correctly ascertained; and the natives will never venture so impious and daring an act (for they account it such), as to pass this point for the first time without doing his Satanic Majesty the homage of throwing a little salt, or some other little article of consumption, into the water hard by. The current here is very strong.

At this point of the river the ground rises a little and forms a pretty recess of water. The mangroves thickly line its banks and extend some distance inland, forming with their lofty birch-

like trunks and close-leaved branches, which are of a varied and bright verdure, an uncommon picture. The outline of the scenery here was more prominently divided into light and shade of a variety of forms. The distance from bank to bank did not exceed a mile. The indentations of the tops of the wood, which were closely set together, were beautifully irregular, and the detached parts of it thrown into singularly fantastic and wild groups. The noble white crane, already spoken of, was scattered numerously about the water and the bank, presenting a picturesque contrast of light and shadow by their white forms, as they moved backward and forward along the river, darkened by the reflection of the mangrove above. In one spot you could see these beautiful birds floating in air, just skimming along, and scarcely touching the stream. In another they were either imperceptibly swimming on their native element, or watching for their prey, their fine necks raised, stalking through the shallows, and their full penetrating eye searching with eagerness for a good mouthful.

Shoals and bushes, the refuse of trees washed down from the banks in the rainy season, were now and then seen in the bed of the river, which gradually narrows here to eighty or ninety yards. The formation of many small islands ; the continual



turns of the river as we proceeded, and the several openings of it were extremely interesting.

We passed Bye Creek and Bademe, where a large quantity of ground nuts are grown, and then reached Elephant Island. In perspective, as seen by us on nearing it, it presented a rich and bold point, of rather a round form, standing out between the two sides of the shores which are opposite, and gradually receded in a protracted circle, whilst it afforded a fine sweeping access onwards up the river. The country here becomes more open, with extensive swamps, covered with high green grass, and distanced in the back ground by the country somewhat elevated. Herds of small cattle were grazing on them and straggling through the rice fields, which are here cultivated and make up, with the ground nuts, the chief produce of sale and consumption. The cattle could not make us out; and at the noise of the steamer, together with their herdsman, took to flight as fast as they could go.

Clustering islets, marshy ground with its deceitful verdure, the banks bordered with something like rushes and low green bush, backed by stunted green palms, here and there relieved by a solitary mangrove not unlike some of the brushwood on our rivers' banks at home, reminded me of English scenery particularly about Egham, Staines, and

Twickenham; and, but for the excessive heat and those peculiar distinctions which strike at once and strongly on the eye, I could have allowed my fancy to realize "Old Thames."

Opposite to Elephant Island is a place called Damasasang Creek, up which there is a trading town of the same name, where a very considerable trade is carried on. Here, I believe, the largest quantity of ground nuts is grown along the river. There are also some English factories in the place.

Smoothly and slowly we steamed it, as happy and good-tempered as seven mortals could be, relieved for a while from the cares of business and fatigues of office, and amused with scenery hourly changing, until we came to Comer, where Mandingos and Jolloffs, to the number of seventy or eighty, stood on the landing-place watching our approach. As we steamed near, a canoe with three or four men in it ventured to take a modest peep at us, but did not, perhaps from fear, venture to come alongside or return our salute. Large piles of ground nuts, enclosed in bamboo fences, were scattered about close upon the bank: and on them hung pieces of paper, linen, and other fanciful things, placed there, as Gris-Gris, to charm away thieves and otherwise preserve the goods from injury.

The foreground from the water-side to nearly the Trading-town is under water during the rains, and cultivated as rice-fields. Inland, too, at the distance of about three miles from this place, are three large native towns, each enclosed with a high mud-wall. The population consists chiefly of Jolloffs and Mandingoes, and is a store of consequence for ground nuts in vast quantities, as well as skins and country cloths.

The country in the foreground here was flatter, but more elevated in the rear. We saw two unusually large monkeys sporting on the tops of the palms ; but they were too far to be reached by the shot of any of our party. About eight o'clock p.m., we anchored. It was a lovely night ; and although the moon was not so brilliant as usual, the borders of the river, resembling in many parts the Thames, except that the funeral-like palm waving in the stream occasionally broke the charm of this home-idea, raised many a thought in our minds of our matchless native land. The scene was exhilarating. The stars shone out with lustre ; the trees in beautiful reflection waved beneath the water ; and not a sound disturbed the welkin but the cheerful echo of our own voices or the note of the thrilling bugle.

Seated on the vessel's side and looking astern over the broad current of waters which our Levia-

than was leaving behind I marked the landscape mixing into grey indistinctness, and thought how little do those most dear to me imagine I am now a voyager on this river, through a country which Mungo Park once traversed ; but whose footsteps trod not so far up its wild and sultry shores as the spot to which we were moving onwards.

The next day we were again detained by the bursting of the boilers for the third or fourth time ; the necessary consequence to be expected from the employment of a condemned vessel, and neglecting her repairs ; and the heavy anchor, tumbling over the vessel's prow into the sluggish water, confined us as fixtures until the next morning. But we were not to be frightened or worried by accidents or intentional hindrances into such passive obedience as to remain willing prisoners on board a dirty, ill-regulated steamer, which had treated us so shabbily. We, therefore, took to the boat and went ashore at Yaanamaroo, a factory and village not belonging to the English, as we do not claim the sovereignty of it. At a short distance from this port is Nabunting, where the Missionaries for some time established a Native Assistant-Missionary, under the protection of Sandegebar, King or Chief of this part of the country as well as of Yanne-maroo.

About here it is that the singular phenomenon of





the Burning-Bush is to be seen, which produces a fruit somewhat similar to a pine-apple in appearance, and when ripe, bursts and consumes itself; producing a strange effect on the bush which is not consumed. This is mentioned by Mungo Park.

Our botanical friend with his blue hat (somewhat resembling that of a doctor) and his smock-frock, a cigar very knowingly placed with great care in the corner of his mouth, and a pair of yellow kid gloves well fitted to his hands, armed himself with his implements; whilst Massa Sancho Panza, with a fowling-piece, useful in these places often for more than the destruction of game, followed, an admiring observer of botanical zeal. The untiring Adjutant, the most inveterate determined destroyer of anything pretending to the nature of game that ever I met with, examined well his fowling-piece, gave his dog Bruce a sharp laconic lecture on good smelling, steadiness, and setting; and filling a quart bottle with something by way of antidote for the heat of a mid-day sun sprang into the boat, breathing vengeance and slaughter at the furthest distance against all the guinea-fowl, partridge and deer which might cross his path. The *Small Part* of the Commissariat Department, more familiarly known by the name of *Bumptious Wilkins*, anxious, also, of having the honour of destroying some

ground-doves and pigeons, which are very numerous here, and are attracted by the wild figs and other fruits, as well as *Our Nephew*, kindly desirous of providing us with some parrot-soup, or monkey-fry, sallied forth with myself to the scene of operation.

The woods and bush soon resounded with the reports. The peaceful occupiers of these retreats unaccustomed to such interference (for the native cares little about the inferior kind of game, such as partridge) were soon on the wing; but very few were killed, owing to their exceeding wildness and the little cover there is for them at this season, on account of the dryness of the ground, and scarcity of grass. The partridge of Africa is larger, stronger on the wing, and more distinctly pencilled; but dry and not so highly flavoured as the English bird of that name. The birds about this part excel in the exquisite beauty of their colours! The Crown Bird, especially, is a natural object of great curiosity. We saw a flight of them in the evening, but could not procure any, as they rise high, are very shy, and require a heavy blow to bring them to the ground. They make a curious noise, and are so called from the feathers which form their top-knot or pole.

There are several fine mahogany-trees about the place, as well as shrubs of elegant formation,

remarkable for their fragrant qualities. Some beautiful creepers of luxurious growth and delicious fragrance are to be met with here. One of these last, in particular, produces a flower similar to the *jesamine* in its smell, having a blossom of a milk-white colour, with five petals. It is called the *Quisqualis*. There is, also, a most beautiful shrub which might almost be classed for the size of it as a tree. It is named the *Cassia Fistula*, very nearly approaches the *Laburnum* in appearance, is of a yellow tinge, and bears its seed in a long, round, black pod of at least a foot and a half or two feet in length. The seed is small, well-protected internally, and of the shape of a small bean.

Cultivation is to be traced here in the rice-fields, which are extensive and show what industry might accomplish. But native indolence and supineness seem at present almost insuperable hindrances to improvement. Our Nephew wounded a large animal; but quietly leaving the creature where he fell, apparently incapable of escaping, whilst reloading his gun, on going up to secure him the fellow quickly escaped into a large hole. There are various sorts of parrots, which together with the monkeys make the most discordant and noisy chattering, to the no small annoyance of a stranger's ear.

There is here a very curious kind of bramble

which spreads itself in patches about the lowland. It is of a prickly nature, somewhat resembling our thorn, and so closely intertwined that it is next to impracticable to walk in it. This affords a secure cover and protection to the partridge, which almost always, when disturbed, takes to this retreat.

## CHAPTER VIII.

MEETING WITH NATIVES IN THE BUSH.—DESCRIPTION OF THEIR HORSES, TRAPPINGS, AND GENERAL APPEARANCE.—DEATH OF THE KING OF YAANAMAROO.—ASSEMBLING OF NATIVES ON THE LANDING-PLACE.—THEIR GENERAL APPEARANCE.—INTERESTING INCIDENTS.—GATHERING TOGETHER OF NATIVES ON APPOINTMENT OF THE NEW KING.—MANNER AND BEARING OF THE SABLE SOVEREIGN AND HIS MINISTER.—THEIR RECEPTION OF US.—BUSTLE OF THE SCENE.—PREPARATIONS FOR CELEBRATING THE NEW DYNASTY.—INCIDENTS.—OLD FRIEND.—ARRIVAL AT M'CARTHY ISLAND.

I HAD strayed to some distance from the rest of the company with my black servant,—one of the soldiers directed to attend upon me, and was far in the bush, led away by the excitement attendant upon the novelty of my situation. A great deal had been said of the natives surprising and carrying off persons for the purpose of detaining them with a view to extort money or goods as a ransom. This is sometimes the practice of the chiefs, and a cunning one it is; but they are not known when unprovoked to do any bodily harm. I was not uneasy on this account,

for although personal property is not regarded with the most scrupulous exactness of honesty at all times, violence to the person is scarcely known amongst the people of this part, particularly towards Englishmen. Besides I was armed with a fowling-piece, a most necessary and indeed indispensable companion in the bush, which no scruples of cloth or profession should allow him who ventures in these wilds to be without; for he might become sooner than he thinks or wishes the prey of some four-footed foe, to whom ransom would be unpalatable at any price.

We had just come out of a thick part of the bush and were striking into what appeared to be a beaten path, when suddenly seven or eight gallant horsemen, black as jet, came right upon us at a sharp trotting pace. I wonder we did not hear the sounds of the animals' hoofs. Now, thought I, I am in for it! Farewell, for a while, my Uncle! Farewell, our Nephew! Alas, farewell Small Part of the Commissariat, Merchants, and thou, poor Bruce, together with thy master, the towering Adjutant — jokes, laughter, liberty — to all, farewell! I despondingly looked at my Sancho Panza; he was a soldier, true; but two against seven and mounted. Had we possessed the fleetness of the Zebra it would have been folly to have attempted flight; and, moreover,

they were well armed and are good shots ! So, we halted. I cast a quick glance at my new acquaintances, and their countenances told that all was well. Reining in their steeds they returned my welcome, whilst I advanced to the foremost, really a fine fellow, and who, I doubt not, was their leader, and we shook hands. It was not my lot, for this time at all events, to prove a burden to my friends or a prisoner of some avaricious chief. By the help of my servant, who acted as interpreter, we held parlance together and made ourselves mutually very agreeable. Until this critical moment, stranger as I was to the country and separated from my friends, far out of hearing or seeing, I could not tell what my well mounted and sable friends might not take it into their heads to do. And palm wine and rice are not the most palatable dainties especially amongst savages, and under a hut of cane and dried grass, where there was a possibility of receiving more attention than I desired, in a way not at all agreeable or consistent with good morals.

The horses on which these men were mounted were of the middle size, strong, and in tolerable condition. They were caparisoned with a variety of tassels and other ornaments. Their saddles and stirrups were of the Turkish style, and the bit was extremely simple, but made to produce

the most severe impression on the mouth. I have not a doubt but you might with little pulling throw an animal at once on his haunches, so sharp a check is felt by the pressure of this curb. The ordinary height of horses in these places is below the Galloway. The leader of this little troop was better equipped than the rest, and his animal superior to those of his companions. He held a long spear richly ornamented with black and brown leather tassels, and the head of it was carefully covered over with a case of the same material with figures marked upon it. This weapon, which was a beauty of its kind for size, he rested on his foot between the ankle and the great toe; the foot was protected by the sandal. A figured cotton cap curiously shaped graced his well formed head; his figure was erect and imposing, and he managed himself well in the saddle. These fellows were provided with arms, such as spears, horse-pistols and swords, which were sheathed in native scabbards, the blades being old ones of English manufacture. Their bridles were single and seemed to be made of hemp. They were evidently well pleased, with the notice we took of them, did not offer, for a wonder, to beg; and were delighted at my patting and admiring their horses. I learnt from them that the King of their territory was dead, and that the weapon which



the leader held was the Royal Spear which is handed down from sovereign to sovereign. We met again at the side of the river where our party first landed, and I tried to purchase the spear of them as it was so handsomely worked and brightly polished, as well as set off with brass and steel or iron ornaments; but the people told me that to part with it would be immediate death to him who was charged with the care of it. I suppose this man was a kind of armour-bearer to his sable majesty.

At the landing place several of the natives had assembled, partly to indulge their curiosity and principally to beg of us all they saw or thought we possessed; for they are, without exception, the most unconscionable tormentors in this way, being never satisfied until they think they have palavered you out of everything you have or can afford to give away. Guns are in common use amongst them, but they are not yet acquainted, at least in this part of the coast, with the Percussion Lock. This invention puzzled them to astonishment. On one of the party firing off some caps at first without, and afterwards with powder, both fear and surprise seized upon them. They first looked at the fowling-piece, turned it backwards and forwards, examined the locks, peeped into the bores, fingered the weapon with suspicious care, for it

was double-barrelled, and not until after much persuasion and encouragement were prevailed upon to fire off a cap. Their delight, which they then manifested in gesture and look, was ridiculous to witness; one after another craved permission to do as the first had done, so that, what with indulging their curiosity and satisfying their cupidity, the caps of our friends diminished very quickly; and I had parted with nearly all mine before getting into the boat. What amazed them was to see the effect of the caps on any light substance, placed a little before the muzzle of the piece, particularly on a lighted match; and, although quite useless to them, yet did they beg and scramble for these with an avidity that was absurdly amusing. A few of the men were of good stature and well-proportioned, but most of them insignificant in mien and countenance. We saw some small horses, but they were miserable looking beasts not worth purchasing, and offered for sale at a most extravagant sum.

In the cool of the evening we paid these worthies another visit, when we found them all excitement and bustle. They would hardly condescend to renew acquaintance, not from any unpleasant feeling, but they were occupied in a serious and solemn palaver. A new king was to be appointed in the room of the deceased monarch, and grand

preparations were making for the inauguration. Some of us went into the open space formed by the surrounding huts, where we saw, seated on a low oblong sort of ottoman or sofa made of reeds crossed at short distances each over the other and covered with matting, the Native who was to succeed the defunct sovereign. By his side was seated a person whom, from his appearance and manner, we agreed upon dubbing his Secretary or Prime Minister. Both these important personages were advanced in years; but his Sable Majesty had the advantage in seniority. Their demeanour was formal; and they assumed an imperturbable gravity, either the effect of native pride—for these people, and particularly their great Lions, are not without their share of this human failing—or, it may be, of that consciousness perhaps which reminded them of the precarious nature of the possession they were going to hold. Apathy and indolence are prominent traits in the character of these people; but I closely examined the countenances of these two distinguished natives, and the expression of the king, I believe, indicated serious thoughtfulness, for he was an intelligent-looking man.

On finding myself in the presence of African Royalty, I offered with all respectful courtesy my hand first to his Majesty, and then to his Secretary

of State, presenting, at the same time, some colars. They received them in the most unconcerned manner, never moving a muscle of their faces, neither rising, nor bowing, nor in any way not so much as with a bend of the head recognizing the proffered compliment. Whilst busily engaged with these unmannered savages I was gently tapped upon the shoulder by a person near me; and turning round beheld a horseman mounted and in arms, extending his hand toward me. He spoke some words, which I afterwards ascertained were,—"an Arab, an Arab!" Whether Arab or not, I will not say, but I gave him three or four colars, with which he was greatly delighted. The colar is a fruit not unlike the Brazil nut in shape, and about its size, and of a pink colour when fresh. In taste they are very bitter, and used by the Arabs and natives as a substitute for food in making long journeys across deserted parts of the country, where they are obliged to undergo many privations through the difficulty of getting provision. The effect of this fruit is, that a piece of it kept in the mouth promotes saliva, which enables the traveller to endure for a long time the cravings of both hunger and thirst. The presentation or acceptance also of one of these fruits is a sure and certain pledge and sign of mutual good will betwixt the parties. If a

Native or Arab takes your collar, he will not injure you.

The scene in which we were now playing our parts was highly dramatic and curious. Horsemen were riding in and out of the enclosed space where the king and his minister sat motionless as statues. The necks of these troopers were covered with Gris-Gris, and their native pouches dangled at their sides. Parties of men arrayed in white garments, their feet covered with sandals, and their dress varying in other respects according to rank and taste, were grouped here and there, talking their unintelligible jargon, and throwing themselves into all the gestures for which they are so proverbial when conversing with one another. The women were busy over their fires, mixing up and cooking their messes. Pickaninnies were to be seen, of all sizes, shapes, and ages, in a state of simple nature, and having their ankles, wrists, elbows, and necks, decorated with beads of every colour. These urchins screamed themselves hoarse from fear or astonishment at the white faces, and altogether made up a picture of African life, which the immortal Hogarth would not have despised. Having acquired an unnatural thirst from the doings and exercise of the day, I craved some drink, and a calabash of water being presented to me by one of the king's liege

subjects, I took a good draught of it with as much relish as if the contents had been the richest juice of the grape, and then returned with the rest of the party to the steamer.

The boilers having been, at last, after a great deal of trouble and difficulty, repaired, we moved onwards, passing through scenery right and left of us, which, notwithstanding its sameness, never failed in exciting admiration. Exquisitely lovely were some of Nature's touches here, rich the tints of the foliage, and beautiful the banks on either side the deep stream with their waving reeds and rushes bowing to the gentle breeze that scarcely fanned them ! Rising and overtopping the river's bank, rose the stout mahogany tree, the pride of Afric's woods. Lofty palmettos, with all their variety, and particularly the dwarf palm and cocoa-nut tree, blended together their drapery with the willow-like shrubs that elegantly dropped their branches into the stream. Extensive rice fields, bounded by impenetrable groves and distant risings, spread themselves before us, far as the eye could see. Such a living picture of the wild, the grand, the beautiful in nature, no one could count it dear to look upon at the cost of even an African mid-day sun, or the heat of a dirty steamer, which could not be under 120° in the shade.

"But what avails this wondrous waste of wealth ?  
 This gay profusion of luxurious bliss ?  
 This pomp of nature ? what their balmy meads,  
 Their powerful herbs, and Ceres void of pain ?  
 By vagrant birds dispersed, and wafting winds,  
 What their unplanted fruits ? what the cool draughts,  
 The ambrosial food, rich gums, and spicy health,  
 Their forests yield ?——  
 What all that Afric's golden rivers roll,  
 Her odorous woods, and shining ivory stores ?  
 Ill fated race ! the softening arts of peace,  
 Whate'er the humanizing muses teach ;  
 The godlike wisdom of the temper'd breast ;  
 Progressive truth, the patient force of thought ;  
 Investigation calm, whose silent powers  
 Command the world ; the light that leads to heaven ;  
 Kind equal rule, the government of laws,  
 And all protecting freedom, which alone  
 Sustains the name and dignity of man :—  
 These are not theirs."

As we steamed away, the noise of the Hippopotamus, which is exactly like the grunting of a pig, was now and then heard sounding in the bush, but at this time we saw one only, which was shot at, but without success. The windings of the river, its angles and verdant banks, continued to delight us more and more, reminding us of old Father Thames with his grassy meads and woodland ! Who could contemplate such a scene, and remembering that we were in the heart of a dreaded clime, in the midst of savage life and

surrounded with dangers from monsters of the deep, monsters of the land, and monsters of our own species, not turn his thoughts to Him for whose pleasure all these things were made and created !

On the left side of the river is a hill, a short irregular mound of earth, not very large or lofty, but broken into ridges or natural parapets of a red colour. Some gold dust was once dug out of it, but not in quantity sufficient to repay the labour, nor was it very pure. Not very far from this place we were joined by another old friend, the officer commanding at M'Carthy's Island, who, with another gentleman, were boating it on the river. Time and the tide of human events change faces as well as fortunes and friendships. I had known the former, who was stationed at Nassau, New Providence, when I was chaplain to the garrison there ; but he remembered me not. The party determined to have a harmless joke at his expense, so I was passed off for a Major in Her Majesty's service sent to take command at M'Carthy's, by my friend the commandant of the Gambia, and in all due form. We saluted, of course, with all the form and ceremony of first acquaintances, M'Carthy's red-coat doing obeisance with all the earnestness and sincerity of a junior officer. I preserved my assumed character as well as I



could, with all becoming gravity, until a general burst of hearty laughter from those who were enjoying the innocent fun exposed the mistake of the worthy officer of M'Carthy's, who was pleased as much as any of the party at the easy manner in which an old acquaintance had been passed off as a pair of epaulettes in plain clothes.

We were all of us soon seated at the friendly board, reviving old and by-gone scenes, or alternately relating such as we had seen and been actors in since last we met. Uncle Curiosity, our botanical friend, enlivened us, as usual, with his dry, caustic humour, odd sayings, and original although not very refined notions, which "set the table in a roar." M'Carthy's Red-coat, calling to his aid all his wonted powers of wit and humour, gave us no quarter, although suffering already under the irritation of my Uncle's quaintness. At last we unanimously gave tokens of a general wish to retire to rest, and therefore betook ourselves to our respective pillows, disposed and fitted for a sound sleep, to forget the events of the day for the pleasant dreams of the night !

## CHAPTER IX.

REMARKS ON THE OPINIONS ABOUT THE CLIMATE OF AFRICA ;  
 TOO MUCH EXAGGERATED. — TOWN OF ST. GEORGE'S, M'CARTHY'S ISLAND ; THE STREETS ; HOUSES ; GARDENS ; VEGETATION.—RIVER AND WHARF.—COUNTRY AND TOWNS ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER.—OCCASIONAL AGGRESSIONS.—MARKET PLACE ; SUPPLIES ; ROADS ; BARRACKS ; JAIL ; HOSPITAL ; SOLDIERS' QUARTERS.—VILLAGE OF FACTOTA.—SOLDIERS' GUARD-ROOM.—RELIGION OF THE NATIVES.—ALPHANG THE MAHOMEDAN PRIEST.—DISSENTING CHAPEL AND SCHOOL.—NO CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT ; PROVISION OF MINISTRY.—DEPARTURE.

WHEN we reached M'Carthy's Island, the lateness of the hour prevented us from forming the faintest idea of the outlandish spot to which we had been steamed. The accounts we had heard of it were, certainly, everything but agreeable or favourable. The place, however, on our landing, at first sight, notwithstanding its bad name, showed it was not so doleful a spot as report would have it to be. I do not wish my readers to suppose that residents in this as well as other settlements of the colony, situated and circumstanced as this is, are not called upon to

undergo many privations and contend with many difficulties. But is not this a contingency common to all new settlements and young colonies, even in more favoured and less unhealthy climates than that of Africa?

The truth is that much is complained of, more is apprehended, and prejudice and fear work together in establishing as a conclusion, which is *not* to be questioned, that the unhealthiness of Sierra Leone is an evil without any alleviation, that its tenure is a burden unprofitable, which it would be politic to give up altogether. This is a theory now too late to carry into practice; we have gone too far, and must fight out the battle we have nobly but perhaps somewhat hastily and too inconsiderately commenced.

Such views as I have adverted to are entertained and expressed by persons who have been misled by those who are dissatisfied with the climate and the colony. For this reason alone they are unceasing in their unqualified condemnation of it. This is not fair dealing with the question, nor is it acting wisely or considerately towards the general interests of the colony.

Africa is, in truth, as yet but little known, except in the vague and incorrect accounts of interested and partial writers. Even the dreaded

fever of its climate, the chief obstacle to its advancement, is a more formidable and greater evil in theory than it is in reality. That the heat is excessive and most trying to the European constitution, that the rainy season on the western coast produces consequences rife with danger to health and life, is not to be denied. At the same time, to all this there is to be opposed what the experience and judgment of men long resident in the colony will and must, if unbiassed, admit, that a very considerable degree of blame is to be attributed to *other* causes. For many of those unfortunate sufferers whose remains moulder in undistinguished companionship on this sultry land, owe their brief existence and premature death as much, if not more, to their own indiscretion and neglect as to the fever itself. If excesses, irregularities, and wilful exposure to night air and dews bring on in more salubrious regions disease and loss of life, how can any one expect other results from similar causes in climates where art and cultivation have not yet overcome local inducements to disease?

The town of M'Carthy is small, consisting chiefly of huts of a circular form, verging to a point, and finished off in a neat manner by a kind of top-knot, like what we often see on our hay-

stacks. They are erected without any regard to order, at a little distance from each other, and enclosed with a fence five or six feet high. This fence is made of stakes driven into the ground with transverse sticks, to which the reed of the country, or cane, split into pieces, is closely fastened. It is very much like our plan of fixing laths for plastering, looks light and neat, and is more durable than at first sight might be supposed.

The store-houses for the ground nuts, which are the chief produce of the earth, are erected in these enclosures. They are of a circular shape, uncovered, raised on large wooden blocks or stone, and heightened as circumstances require. The streets are lengthy, broad, and clean, but exposed, and severely trying to the eyes for want of shade. The principal houses occupied by the merchants, and which run parallel with the river, are built chiefly of stone and brick,—an improvement on wood floors in the country. Their stores are kept underneath; and the first-floor rooms form the habitable part of the house. These are raised and supported on good strong stone pillars, and are airy, spacious, and handsomely furnished after the English fashion. Fronting them, and on the opposite side of the road near the water's edge, are gardens fenced

in according to the country method, or protected by low walls and railings. These I was surprised to find well-stored with most of our English vegetables, and in perfection, for they grow prolifically here. I tasted English potatoes dug from these gardens of a moderate size and well grown. In no part of the tropics where I have been did vegetables appear to flourish better than at M'Carthy. It was interesting to observe the yards with their immense heaps of ground nuts, and the numerous pigeons feasting on them as contentedly as possible.

The width of the river here is not considerable, but the depth is equal to the reception of vessels of moderate burden. The wharf for the landing of passengers and goods is worse than that of St. Mary's, consisting of nothing more than a few pieces of timber thrown across from the bank to the vessel, which the depth of the water will allow to anchor near enough to the land for that purpose. On the opposite side of the river the country is open, flat and cultivated in some parts. In the uncultivated portions of it bush and a kind of copsewood, with here and there a Monkey-tree, are to be seen. There is a town which is seen from M'Carthy's, inhabited by natives of the territory, which is independent of English interference and governed by a king or chief. The

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the residence of the Commandant by way of distinction, and not ten yards from it, is a building rudely constructed, yet making amends for its deficiency in stability, architectural arrangements, and convenience, by the title with which it is honoured. Let my reader picture to himself a low-pitched dwelling of the rudest material, partly stone and mud, with a thatched roof. Then his imagination must give to this tenement two divisions and as many doors, with an old bell suspended over one of them. If his fancy will next conceive the whole of it a little out of the perpendicular, and fill up the respective apartments of this Colonial Government edifice, erected on the ground floor for the better preservation of the health of its occupants, with handcuffs and chains in one of the rooms, and culinary utensils in the other, he will realize the complex idea of Gaol and Kitchen united under one roof! Strange confusion! But by far more strange, that indifference exhibited about the fatal effects which those prisoners, whose honour will not suffer them to use that opportunity which they have of escape, must experience from the wet and damps of the stagnant water that inundates the yard in the rainy season. Surely such a scene would not be undeserving a place in the "Illustrated London News;" for there you may hear at the same time

the grumblings of the captive and the frizzling and spitting of the steaks together uniting their harmonious sounds.

The Military Hospital is another proof of wretched professional ignorance and unconcern for the comfort and even safety of the poor sick soldier. This miserable apology for a refuge for the invalided sufferer is also built on the ground, and unprotected from the rains and floods, which easily find their way into the rooms, to the discomfort and danger of the patient. Medicines are scantily supplied, and it sometimes happens, that, in the absence of a Garrison Surgeon, his office is supplied by an *illiterate Black Quack*, who for his invaluable services, conducted on the never-failing principle of kill or cure, receives Fifteen Pounds per annum ! Rare instance, and worthy imitation, of Colonial liberality ! For this salary the pseudo-doctor supplies advice and drugs to the inmates of the prison, as well as of the hospital.

The skill and judgment of the architect in design are equally praiseworthy in the construction of the Soldiers' quarters, which have the appearance of a row of wine vaults more than habitations for human beings. There is no external protection against the bad weather, so that one of two alternatives is only left the men, either to be exposed to wind and rain without mercy, or immerse them-

selves in nearly total darkness. The Powder Magazine forms one of the buildings in the barrack yard, which is open; it is on the right side as you enter, between the quarters of the officers and the men. An agreeable locality if it blew up!

Before leaving M'Carthy's Island I rode to a village called Factota, a few miles from St. George's. It is situated at the extreme point of the island; the road to it is good, and parallel with it at a short distance. On the right winds the other branch of the river, which is narrow. The trees about here are neither large nor many, but the shrubs and bush intermix thickly with each other, and form groups which have much the appearance of a shrubbery. The face of the country is flat, but not without interest. The land does not rise a great deal from the level of the river, and is therefore subject to heavy inundations when the rains prevail. One good result arises from this circumstance, that it irrigates and leaves a rich marl or composite, which proves a capital manure to the land, which yields in consequence abundance of rice and corn.

At Factota there is a Military Guard constantly on duty. They are stationed there, as it is said, for the safety of the island in overawing and checking any irruption of the Natives on the borders. But virtually, it would prove of little use in this respect if required to act on the defensive or

offensive; for its numerical force is inadequate to any successful resistance, and the distance from the town is too far to admit of any seasonable co-operation, should an insurrection take place. Leaving this question of practicability or impracticability of its efficiency as a guard to better judges than I can be of such matters, I may be permitted to remark, that it is unjust and cruel to suffer soldiers to be stationed there, and be so badly provided as they are with necessities indispensable to their health and the preservation of their accoutrements. From the smallness of the hut where the guard are stationed, the men are necessitated to billet with the villagers where they can. To all this annoyance the soldiers are subject at this place for days together, as they are only relieved at long intervals. The Commandant of St. Mary's on inspecting this guard very judiciously and properly removed it, until the quarters were made fit for the soldiery to occupy them. The too common but fallacious argument almost always brought forward against improvements necessarily required, namely, that "what has answered so long, can answer still," will not vindicate the injustice and impolicy of continuing men in a place not fit for them to live at with safety. This method of evasion, however, is nothing new in these colonies; but it is seldom, if ever, resorted to, when Public

Money is demanded for purposes not nearly so much called for as in the above case. The tediousness and difficulty, then, of remedying such evils should teach all those who are appointed to govern and legislate in these places the necessity of avoiding the making of them in the first instance.

My short stay at M<sup>c</sup>Carthy's would not admit of my gaining much information as to Religious Belief amongst the people. What I could learn was, that superstition, idolatry, and the Koran, combined in a greater or less degree to influence the natives who are not yet converted to the purer faith of the Gospel. Most of the Gris-Gris here are filled with scraps of the Koran, the value of which is enhanced in proportion to the esteem in which the writer or copier of them is held. But, notwithstanding their seeming reluctance, perhaps real and sincere in a few instances, to part with these sacred treasures, the bigoted credulity of the followers of the prophet of Mecca, nevertheless, very frequently yields to the seductive temptation of a few dollars. And a little palaver carefully brought to back your persuasions, soon induces them to resign their scraps or books. These are beautifully written in Arabic with ink of different colours.

There was a Mahomedan priest at M<sup>c</sup>Carthy's whom I met at the Commandant's, a remarkably

fine and intelligent fellow. His name was Alphang, and he might be fifty years old. His stature was of the middle size; his figure was manly, erect, and his limbs athletic as well as exquisitely moulded. He was often complimented on the symmetry of his legs, and evidently with much satisfaction to himself. His countenance indicated amiability and might be pronounced expressive. He spoke English as well as myself, and was very affable, unaffected, and good-natured. He was habited in a white vestment, his feet were shod with sandals, and he went with his head uncovered. But what makes the history of Alphang more curious is the fact of his total blindness. Yet he walked about everywhere without any guide and with the most perfect ease. He would go up and come down the stairs, cross the bridges and gutters, measure with surprising accuracy any known irregularity in the road, and not only follow in the beaten track backwards and forwards, but frequently strike out into the more unfrequented parts without stumbling or in the least hesitating. He was a frequent and ever welcome visitor at every house, which he would distinguish with singular accuracy. Alphang was in high repute from his very affliction, which did not appear to distress him, since he was always cheerful. His popularity was partly owing to his blindness, for

he was Circumciser General to the natives, almost all of whom submit themselves to the Mosaic rite, without distinction of sexes. There is a neat and commodious Wesleyan Chapel, with a comfortable residence for the minister attached to it. The upper part forms the dwelling-house, and in the lower divine worship is performed. It is substantially built. The chapel has two rows of pillars, and open seats for the congregation; there is also a small chaste marble tablet to the memory of one of the Missionaries of that denomination of Christians who died at that place. There is an excellent school, superintended and supported by them. Yet Church provision on the principles of the Establishment is nowhere to be seen. All has been left to our Wesleyan brethren to accomplish in educating and propagating Christianity amongst the people of M'Carthy's Island; and what they have done, they have done well. That a place of worship, however, should not have been yet built, nor any missionary provided for the spiritual wants of that community on the principles of our Established Church ought to act as a strong reason to supply that deficiency as early as possible. A Church Missionary should be given to M'Carthy's population, who would appreciate and, I am sure, profit by the blessing of such a boon. Here a most extensive field of ministerial useful-

ness is open to the missionary, which would amply repay the labourer; but, I fear, until the Church in the Western coast of Africa is provided with an active and pious Bishop the spiritual destitution which is now so much to be deplored will remain unrelieved.

During the short time we were at St. George's we received every kindness and attention from the officers and merchants who seemed to vie with each other in their good offices towards us. The hour for departure, however, came at last; the anchor was heaved; the standard of St. George's displayed the English colours from the top of a lofty washing-pole, for it was no better, and amidst the usual demonstrations of regret at parting, we took our leave of the island, pleased with our reception and still more delighted that it was not our lot to be left behind.



## CHAPTER X.

OPENING REFLECTIONS.—SPOT WHERE MUNGO PARK LANDED.—  
 DIFFICULTY OF NAVIGATION.—ALLIGATORS.—SUPERSTITIOUS  
 CUSTOMS.—THE SUPPOSED NAME OF THE LOCAL DEITY.—  
 DURYASEEN.—FACTORY PORTS OR VILLAGES.—CHARACTER AND  
 EMPLOYMENT OF NATIVES.—LAND AND ITS PRODUCE.—BIRDS  
 AND GAME.—HEIGHT OF THERMOMETER.—STEAM AND IN-  
 INSTINCT.—OTHER NATIVE PORTS AND VILLAGES.—SURPRISE OF  
 NATIVES.—LOCALITY, SOIL, ETC.—NARROW ESCAPE.—HIPPO-  
 POTAMI.—AMUSEMENTS ON BOARD.—DOG-MONKEYS; ONE OF  
 THEM SHOT; CURIOUS DISPLAY OF INSTINCT ON THE OCCA-  
 SION.—CHARACTER, DRESS, AND PECULIARITIES OF NATIVES  
 OF YABBU TENDA.—ARTICLES OF COMMERCE HERE.—NATIVE  
 NOTION OF A GOOD BARGAIN.

THERE is a thrilling charm in the spirit of adven-  
 ture and local change, which abundantly repays a  
 man for all the inconveniences to which travelling  
 subjects him. Onwards you move, novelty ever  
 varying the scene, until, like a dream, or highly  
 wrought picture of the fancy, the journey or  
 voyage comes to an end, and the illusion passes  
 away! But memory loves to dwell upon it; and  
 it is no small part of the pleasure experienced in  
 exploring the beauties and riches of the Material

world to pencil afresh the living Panorama and thus revive the first impressions of the mind !

The first place of local interest which we passed after our departure from St. George's was the spot where Mungo Park is said to have been entertained by the natives, and from which he commenced his journey through the interior. On the left side of the river the scenery became more hilly, and the brakes and windings, which give it a most interesting character, more abrupt, and consequently, more difficult of navigation. At this part of the Gambia were some rocks, rearing their dark and ominous tops above the unsuspected waters, just high enough to warn the helmsman of his danger, and afford him a timely escape from not only the disagreeable contingency of a wreck, but of becoming food for alligators, which abound in this river. We saw two of these monsters of the deep. The largest of these, was in truth a *monstrum horrendum informe* ; and there he might be seen on a rock which juttred out of the water, his huge jaws open and motionless, basking and on the look-out for prey, in all his ugliness and terror. Nor was he to be moved from his station by the several shots fired at him, until two or three balls, whizzing pretty close, warned him it was time to be out of sight, when he sullenly and lazily slid into the water.

A few miles farther up the river from M'Carthy's Island, we came to a place, to which Superstition had given a ludicrous degree of interest; and where it is a *nolens volens* matter, compulsory on the Natives who intend passing the spot, to do obeisance to some Imaginary Influence. This Being of the imagination, whether of earth or air, of sea or sky, is believed to have a most unaccountable predilection for Natural Exhibitions. At the commencement of our expedition we were informed by the merchants, who accompanied us, that we should have to undergo a certain ceremony, if we would pass and repass this particular place with any degree of safety. I need not say, my curiosity was at a loss to realize what the tribute of respect was, which we were called upon to pay to this unknown and unsubstantial ruler of the place. Avarice formed no ingredient of his nature; nor was he partial to sanguinary expiations. To judge from the singularity of his choice, he must have been a humoursome sort of sprite, or spirit. When, indeed, we were fairly acquainted with what we had to do in order to pacify him, one simultaneous burst of laughter hailed the explanation of our duty. The ceremonial, to describe it as inoffensively as language can do, was that every passenger should, *simplex munditiis*, present the more honourable part of his body over

the vessel's side, to this said mysterious agency; and the giggling of the crew who were forward told us the moment of probation was approaching. It was amusing to see how the faces of some of our party changed, lengthened, and even grew pale. One man, well known for his frequent visits to this part of the coast for scientific purposes, and whom we named, in harmless humour, Uncle Curiosity, could not help, stoical as he was, manifesting symptoms of uneasiness by repeated, significative twitches of the "smock frock," which he always wore in his excursions; and a forced laugh from the rest of us told that we were all uneasy at this critical moment of our adventures. The Adjutant's dog, poor Bruce, as if grateful for the many indulgences allowed him in scampering through the Bush in quest of Partridge and Guinea Fowl, looked up with a most touching eye of sympathy at his master, apparently sensible of the indignity which he was doomed to share in common with the rest of us. The worthy Commandant of the Garrison at St. Mary's, Bathurst, with all the alacrity and *sang froid* of a sterling Red-coat, accustomed to exposures prepared for the broad-side, whilst others paced up and down the quarter-deck, like men uneasy about something not very agreeable which they had to do.

Arrived opposite that part of the river where

fine oil for lamps, quite free from the unpleasant smell usually belonging to this article. It is also capable of being converted into food, and supplies the want of the nut and walnut at the dessert; the wine being seldom unaccompanied with this substitute, which, carefully baked, is by no means a bad thing. We started numerous coveys of partridge of a large size, with Guinea fowl, wild pigeons, and ground doves, which are continually to be met with. Both the partridge and Guinea fowl, however, when dressed, are dry and tasteless. Several Crown Birds delighted us with their magnificent heads and graceful necks, and the brilliancy of their full and piercing eyes of golden lustre. The thermometer at this time was  $106^{\circ}$  in the shade.

About seven A.M. the next morning we left Foulah Tendi, and came to another batch of huts, called Banna Tendi. At ten A.M. passing Mangoree, a place of the same description, where the offending stream ran us right into the bush, bordering the river's bank, to the alarm of the living creatures, I doubt not, beneath as well as above water. The birds, thus unceremoniously disturbed, betook themselves in rapid flight to the other side, screaming forth their displeasure, as they winged their way from so novel an intruder; whilst the boughs and branches cracked and split

under the weight of oppression, and thus increased the confusion and medley of the scene. At last we managed to land about four P.M. at *Cushama*; then passed *Canaby* and *Benefit*, places of the same character as those already described, and anchored at the last of these for the night, with a thermometer at  $110^{\circ}$  in the cabin. Between *Foulah Tendi* and *Banna Tendi* rocks appeared on the right hand as we advanced up the river, and a shoal on the left of us. Here the Gambia narrows suddenly and considerably, so much so as to compel us to keep close to the bank, which the depth of water admitted us to do without any danger. As we glided on, we could from the side of the steamer break off the branches which thickly and gracefully inclined over us. A number of natives, as many as sixty or seventy, who had assembled together to look at us, presented a grotesque appearance. Some of them had on white vestments, others wore garments of blue cloth, with caps of every shape and colour. Many of them were almost *secundum naturam*. There they stood, vacantly, yet wonderingly gazing at the steamer as she dragged her huge bulk through the sluggish stream. Some of them took to their heels and ran off as fast as they were able.

About this part of the interior the country assumes again somewhat of a hilly character, not

very much elevated, gradual in its ascent, and rocky at its summit. The soil is not deep, and is of a reddish colour. The steep is well shaded and thickly wooded at the height. The water of the river about this locality is, also, much clearer than we hitherto found it. The same abruptness from the flat to the rise was preserved which had prevailed from our first movement.

At this time an accident of a serious nature had well nigh befallen us through the timidity and carelessness of our pilot, a black man, and the fellows in the boats who hesitated to tow our vessel. We shaved a rock, on whose concealed top the waters were treacherously playing. So much for many masters without a captain to rule them in good earnest ;—and a vessel, *without rudder* to steer her ! The pilot in this as in every other little difficulty which his own irresolution more than any other cause originated, betrayed the most unpardonable want of foresight and decision. Famed as the *Albert* was for her unfortunate acquaintance with the other two vessels, which attempted a passage up the Niger, she became still more notorious by the freaks she played with us on this occasion with the aid of rock and sand, and shoal and bush ; and certainly proved her fitness for Active Colonial Service. Our aquarian friends, the alligators, would have

had rare picking and choosing, had we measured our lengths in the stream. But our lot was not, happily, to die so cruel a death ; for, in the midst of these hair-breadth escapes, we cleared all difficulties, and anchored at a place called *Finda Fati* for the night.

To-day we had a fine opportunity of seeing the Hippopotamus in all his native strength and ugliness, laving himself luxuriously and sportively in his element. Several of these huge, amphibious creatures showed themselves. They did not appear alarmed at the firing of the muskets pointed at them for destruction, nor to suffer any harm from the balls which fell thickly about them and must have tried the hardness of their hides.

For, whizzing from the vessel's side,  
Ball after ball shot o'er the tide ;  
Rose the loud shout from many a tongue,  
As through the bush the echo rung  
Of musket, or of lighter gun ;  
From side to side the wild duck flew,  
Startled at sounds so strange and new !  
The crane forsook the mangrove shade  
Silence so long its own had made ;  
Poor Pug, unable to find out  
What all the noise could be about,  
Was forced to make a quick retreat  
From off his high and palmy seat ;  
By Instinct, somehow, taught the notion  
Danger grows less in—Locomotion !



The soldiers enjoyed the novelty and excitement amazingly. Not less I should think than a hundred round of ball, well aimed home, astonished these monsters of the water. It was excellent diversion and practice for the men ; but they fired to little purpose : one of the creatures by the sudden plunge he made into the water seemed struck with some effect. Indeed every one partook of the impulse of the moment :—

On ev'ry brow good humour smiled,  
As harmless mirth the hours beguiled ;  
The gravest even then could dare  
Some portion of the joy to share ;  
And Laughter, with a tear-lit eye  
Pressing both sides, was forced to cry ;  
As waken'd by the potent spell  
That sparkles in the bright Moselle,  
My Uncle, with his well-known smile,  
And, puffing volumes all the while,  
Mimick'd in gesture and in face,  
The Polka's hop with matchless grace ;  
Whilst, in the whistling science tried,  
Bumptious the want of gimp supplied !  
The sternest Friar, had he been there,  
Had sought, in vain, his lungs to spare.  
Such wit oozed out of George's brain,  
To seek to save your throat were vain !  
But, envying Time, that loves to steal  
From men the shortest bliss they feel,  
Brought song and story to their close  
In the still quiet of repose ;

For each one creeping to his nest,  
In berth, or hammock, found a rest,  
Snoring in dreamy thoughts away  
The cheerful pastimes of the day !

The following day we once more tried the force of our steam, but little occurred to interest us. There were a number of Dog-monkeys, playing their antics, and springing from bough to bough with extraordinary agility. Some shots were fired at them, and one fell, wounded. It was both painful and laughable to see the strange and ridiculous manner in which the animal showed his surprise, and the pain he suffered. Raising himself up, the moment after he had fallen at the shot, he put his paw upon the wound, patted the part several times, examined his wound with a pitiful and significant expression of distress, looked now at his destroyers and then at the bush as if to invite assistance, and fell unable to get up again. The boat was instantly lowered and in five or six minutes at the spot opposite where the animal was seen. But Pug had disappeared ; and it was to no purpose that the most diligent search was made for him, as the Commandant particularly wanted to obtain the creature, alive or dead. It was evident the animal was too severely wounded to make his escape, and could only have just crawled within the thicket. But one of our travelling

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friends, a resident at Bathurst, had told us that the current opinion is, that whenever one of this species of animals is wounded, or killed, it is very difficult to secure the creature unless you are near enough to get your prize immediately, as the body is quickly carried off by his fellows and removed in some way or other, beyond the means of seizure.

The next place we passed was *Faltatendo*, when we came to Pry, another Factory Port, where we had the misfortune to run aground. Having assured ourselves as well as we could that we were in no danger of falling to pieces, for our craft was a very suspicious one, we consulted together how we might best accomplish the object of our enterprise, and soon determined upon boating it the rest of the distance to the Falls. We accordingly lowered two boats, and dividing ourselves into two parties made a start. Having pulled as far as *Yabbu Tenda*, a Factory port, the last on the banks of the Gambia, and distant about eight or ten miles from the steamer, we commenced reconnoitring. The Natives here were, without question, by far a finer race of men than the generality of those we had seen; and some of the women possessed handsome and regular features. The same local peculiarities were to be seen here as elsewhere. The females were literally studded

with ornaments "from head to foot;" and these consisted chiefly of rings of brass, gold, bone, ivory, iron—in short, almost any material, according as their taste and coppers would allow them to choose. Necklaces, varying in size, shape, and quality, were suspended in profusion around their necks. They are also very partial to the use of money in the way of ornament, and wear as earrings such pieces as shillings, sixpences, and other small coins. We saw numerous herds and flocks; and goats, as a matter of course, in scores. These people betrayed an inordinate love for money, a trait of character peculiar to the African; and it required some caution and management to escape from their cheating tricks. They bestow particular care and attention in the dressing and arranging of their hair, plaiting and dividing it with considerable labour, and arranging it according to the custom of their tribe. Some twist it in small knots of a spiral shape and fasten it at the top; others shave it off close to the forehead, leaving only a small tuft over the scalp, or let it grow to the length of ten or twelve inches, perhaps more, and drop down close to the side of their faces in fine and well greased ringlets. I observed, too, that the hair, with many of them, was gathered into a shape something like a tiara and covered with as many beads as they could load it with of

coral and amber, which they very much admire, and pay liberally for. *Gregorees* are in high estimation among the natives. They are of all sizes, shapes, colours, and material, and used as charms for every purpose, to avert evil or misfortune, or to bring them some advantage. I observed also that they had a Gris-Gris for every part of the body to which they are desirous of affording a more than common degree of security from harm. The head or arms, the legs, the wrists, the ancles, are supplied with them, according to the exigency of the case. They were to be seen, moreover, dangling from behind or before, and bobbing backwards and forwards in a manner the most ridiculous to witness. What with these and their pouches, snuff-boxes, swords, and bits of the Koran, in leathern cases, indiscriminately arranged about their persons, they constituted as whimsical and odd a specimen of African style of dressing as can be imagined.

The articles of Barter which are to be met with and are most in request here, are gold, wax, ivory, hides, and ground nuts. Now and then a few horses, small and of a slight frame, may be obtained: but an exorbitant price is asked for them. One of these I saw standing near a large tree by the water-side, caparisoned exactly after the Turkish fashion and with a bit sufficient to tear

its mouth to pieces with little pressure. The trap-pings were very variegated and handsome. The rider's dress was in the Arab style ; he was advanced in years but carried himself with dignity and grace.

Having noticed all that could be seen, we prepared for proceeding to the Falls. Great was our disappointment on learning that the depth of water would not permit us at this season of the year to make the attempt in a vessel of the size of our steamer. We therefore determined on boating it under the guidance of a native of the place, who knew the localities accurately. On asking him what he would expect in remuneration for his work, we were told that he would undertake the job for the modest charge of ten dollars ! However, as we found that it would take us the whole day to get there and that our labour and curiosity would not be repaid by any novelty, the men in the boats having had also hard work already, it was agreed, *nemine contradicente*, to recompense ourselves for our disappointment by taking some refreshment, for which we were well prepared, in the first favourable and retired spot which we could find. It was not long before the wished-for retreat was discovered. The noble branches of a stately mahogany tree, with its thick-leafed boughs towering aloft above the bush that embosomed it,

invited us to its welcome shade. Running our boats, therefore, ashore, after some amusing clambering and slipping, in getting up a steep of twenty or thirty feet, one and all we simultaneously cast ourselves full length on the ground bestrewed with leaves, and commenced an attack on the caterer's department. As the gastric juice of every one's stomach had begun to prove troublesome—the invariable effect of a mid-day African sun—and the labials were also suffering severely from Tropical heat, we lost no time in making due arrangements for the repast. Soon this wild and lonely spot, scarcely trodden by human foot, presented an animated spectacle of nine hungry and thirsty travellers busied with their knives and forks, their bottles and glasses ! As my object in these pages is to give the reader a faithful and simple account of what is done as well as suffered on this so much dreaded coast, I trust he will not think I am dwelling too freely and fully in detail on such scenes as those I am now portraying, because they will best show the manner of life which is pursued in this part of the world.

## CHAPTER XI.

THE BREAKFAST.—THE DISPERSION.—GENERAL APPEARANCE OF THE COUNTRY.—MEETING WITH A NATIVE IN THE INTERIOR.—A DISAGREEABLE NEIGHBOUR.—NATIVE VILLAGES AND TOWNS.—BIRDS.—GAME.—HIPPOPOTAMI MARKS.—ACCIDENT.—COUNTRY ABOUT FATA TENDI.—DONKEYS.—NATIVE CHIEFS ON BOARD THE STEAMER.—ANT HILLS.—MORE NATIVE VILLAGES.—HEIGHT OF THERMOMETER.—ARRIVAL AT ST. GEORGE'S.—REMARKS.—PREPARATIONS FOR ENTERTAINING THE M'CARTHY FRIENDS.—INSPECTION OF SOLDIERS.—DIFFICULTIES OF PROVIDING FOR THE FEAST.—THE DINNER AND ITS TERMINATION.—LOYALTY IN THE WILDS.

MINDFUL of the rules of civil society even in these wilds, and affected by the invincible force of habit, we spread upon the ground a very respectable table cloth, and disposing plates, knives, and forks, with tumblers and wine-glasses in due order upon it, squatted, either cross-legged or sideways, in Eastern ease, on the cloaks and jackets which supplied the place of sofas. Here and there a stump, smoothed and rounded by age, with a little management answered uncommonly well for a stool. Uncle Curiosity, discarding the tobacco-leaf from between his lips, placed himself on a



rural seat under the mahogany tree, and adjusting his knees to such a position as would mathematically steady his plate, made a fierce attack on a pigeon-pie, having first smoothed away any difficulties of swallowing which might have been in the way according to the fashion adopted in hot climates. Our Nephew, for so the Commandant of Bathurst was by general vote recognised during our expedition, betook him to the racy claret, on the conviction, as he argued, that drinkables were better in compound than taken as simples in a spot so arid and dry as that where we were located on; whilst the Adjutant of poplar height and not stubbornly opposed to mixtures and solutions, found but one fault—that dear Old Ireland's exhilarating poteen was not available to warm his heart. Notwithstanding some scruples of conscience about the Dram Trade and the injurious System of Distillation, which at first withheld two or three of the company from taking a constitutional draught, they soon waived their objections and confessed that every good thing might be taken in moderation.

Having heartily breakfasted, our party separated for a while to follow their several pursuits as fancy or business suggested. Uncle Curiosity was soon lost in the bush amongst the sweets and prickles, pursuing his botanical researches; and

could his patron, for whom this active and venerable son of the woods and wilds has so hardly and successfully laboured to the promotion of knowledge and science, have beheld us, the sight would have amused him more than Knowley's Collection itself. The adjutant, myself and another of the nine struck out at a venture into the interior. The country we found to be flat, very bushy in parts, and ornamented with several fine mahogany trees. We walked inland about six or seven miles, and met with extensive proofs of cultivation. The bush had been cleared away and burnt in large tracts of land: with the ashes they nourish the soil for the reception of the seed or grain. Large spaces of grass, as high as twelve or fourteen feet and dried to the consistency of hay, intermixed with a thick bramble, so prickly yet so pliable as to make it quite impervious, afforded a secure shelter and protection for the game, which is in abundance here. As we skirted the copse, which extended for miles before us along a good and evidently frequented path of four or five yards wide, an aged Mandingo came in contact with us; he told us that the path led to a large town in the interior, called *Bango*; he had slung across his shoulders a leathern bag containing water, of which he freely gave us a taste, and it was deliciously cool. He followed us nearly to our little encampment, and

we tried by every kind persuasion to induce him to come and partake of our grub, but he only shook his head, peeped about him as if suspecting treachery, squatted down on the ground, jumped up, stared at us, and retrograded some steps. We were now in sight of our bivouac; nothing however could tempt him to accompany us, so we left him to his cunning or his fears. Whilst busy at our meal which a keen appetite made us enjoy, one of our party recognised a large alligator in the mud of the bank just below, no doubt on the look-out for a delicate morsel. A shot well aimed at the monster sent him speedily into the river, if not mortally yet severely wounded. Some of the shrubs about this part were exquisitely beautiful, particularly those which resembled our labernum. There is also a creeper named the quisqualis which is very lovely. The fragrance of some of these was overpowering.

On our return to the steamer, which was not until late in the evening, we were delighted to find her freed from her confinement. This had been effected by lightening her of a quantity of wood, and we accordingly made the best of our course homewards, recognizing, in succession, *Yarbu Tenda*, *Cuptalla*, *Cunda*, and *Cosson*, having previously regaled ourselves at Yarbentenda on board a vessel belonging to our friend Mr. Brown,

one of the Bathurst merchants who had joined us. There was another craft there at anchor, of a good size, waiting for a cargo. Some very beautiful cranes were brought down by the gun ; and on landing to explore the country, our Nephew killed five or six Guinea-fowl at a shot, so plentiful are these birds in this part. We also crossed some deer, and met with numerous coveys of partridge. Distinct and heavy footmarks of the Hippopotamus were also traced here. These animals in their graniverous perambulations do an immense deal of mischief to the crops and whatever they unfortunately pass over. On reaching *Fata Tendi*, we were again detained by the bursting of the boiler. Taking advantage of the accident I landed, in company with the Adjutant, and explored the locality. Breaking off a little from the bank, we entered at once into the bush ; and traversing a narrow but well-beaten path descended by a sudden and abrupt declivity into a valley several feet below us. On arriving at the level we found ourselves nearly encircled by a bold ridge of dark brown and irregular rocks, diversified in form, and from their appearance as well as the character of the ground about them containing, probably, a quantity of iron-ore. In front of the wood was an extensive swamp, on whose surface various birds were refreshing themselves. We did not venture near it,

knowing the danger we should incur of meeting with some very disagreeable and uncereemonious acquaintances. It was plain that there is little intercourse with the Natives about this part, inland, for at no great distance from us we saw a man and woman at work. On hailing them they were evidently alarmed; for after running backwards and forwards as if in fear, they quickly disappeared. Perhaps they were not ignorant of the iniquitous system of slavery. I was very much astonished to see a number of large-sized donkeys in excellent condition, happily grazing off the *naturally made hay* which nearly hid from sight some huts at the slope of the hill we had descended.

My reader will, perhaps, smile at what I am going to say; but I can assure him, that even a decent, well-bred jackass in such a spot of the universe as we were on here, was a more than pleasing object.

We now traced our steps up the ascent by which we had descended into the plain, and were agreeably surprised by observing, what appeared through the openings of the trees to be a sheet of water, and on looking more attentively at it we found it was so. Proceeding to the brow of the lofty but cracked rock, which bent frowning over the abyss below, we tried to ascertain if this body

of water were isolated or attached to the main stream. A scene suddenly opened before us, whose romantic aspect filled us with delight. Perpendicularly below us at a fall of some hundred feet was a rich bank of verdure, adorned with the noble mahogany tree, which raised aloft into mid-air its wide-spreading branches. The green and wanton creepers enriched their statelier neighbours with their lively tints and filled the air with their perfume. Their white and yellow flowers, blossoming thickly over the tops of the shrubs and bush which embowered the numerous birds which frequent the spot, presented a grateful picture to the eye. There rose the stately, branchless palm, solitary, and distinguished by its plummy leaf. There the refreshing tamarind with its grey-green leaf, close set and regular, stood out in bold relief, blending harmoniously their various tints of light and shade. Far as the eye could explore lay stretched in sinuous changings the glassy bosom of the river Gambia, broad and deep, meandering for miles through an extensive country; a grey horizon, and woodland faintly coloured, mixed and mellowed with each other. Just under us, to the left, was moored a hulk; a few yards to the right of us from the spot whereon we stood, the Steamer, with her ugly and blackened funnel rising aloft, lay at anchor. Many

of the Natives were either standing in mute astonishment, or squatting on the ground, watching our proceedings with curiosity and wonder partaking of fear. From the steamer's deck, crowded with Blacks and Whites, indiscriminately huddled together and engaged in their several occupations, came sounding ever and anon the shout and laugh, breaking the silent and peaceful solitude which, as it were, spell-bound the place. Beyond was sinking, gradually and in all the brilliant splendour of a tropical sun, the full round orb of departing day lavishly casting his glory in reflective brightness o'er the water, lit up with his farewell rays. Directly fronting us, and in measureless extent, spread the flat and open plain. Central in this view stood a Mandingo town, with its round conical-shaped huts and cane fences. We observed several women busily occupied in various pursuits. The men, according to custom, were idly lounging about. The former do almost everything, and are, in short, little better than slaves. Now and then a horseman might be seen scampering across the distance, or some large bird sailing heavily over the lake.

The whole of the scenery thus described made a picture most interesting ; it was, to say the least of it, the beautiful in nature — and this, too, in Africa ! And we enjoyed it, although exposed to

the heat of a midday sun, and two hundred miles up the river from St. George's.

In descending the slope that led from the natural and rocky parapet on which we had taken our stand, we heard the shrill sounds of the bugle giving out as a signal note for our return, "The roast beef of Old England!" To this we were not slow in paying diligent attention; and accordingly, taking to the "double quick," soon regained the deck of the *Albert*.

During our absence some chiefs had paid a visit to the vessel, bringing a few presents with them. They behaved, however, as is commonly the case, in a troublesome manner, taking great liberties, and showing a disposition to take more than to give. To humour and gratify these important personages and keep them in anything like manageable order, calls for much forbearance. I was told it was, also, necessary, as much as possible to gratify their whims — for any opposition in these parts of the country, unrecognized and unprotected as they are by British Policy, would, in all probability, close the avenues of trade and expose the persons of those whom business leads hither to seizure or even worse. Here I saw a black man chained by the neck to a tree; he had committed some offence and was to be sold as a slave.

Whilst rambling about on shore we saw some



singular specimens of the ant-hill, which is very common in this country. They were large and high, measuring, I should think, from the base to the top, at least eight or ten feet, and rising from a level of proportionate dimensions in a conical shape, to a point. These pyramids of insect art and labour are made of a kind of sandy earth, of a colour between red and brown and harden by time and exposure to sun and air to a substance nearly equal to sand-rock. Indeed it requires to be broken by means of some iron implement of husbandry; and its destruction is attended with much trouble. They are said to be very injurious to the growth and preservation of any produce of the soil. Such is the skill, perseverance, and labour of these ants, or "Bug-a-Bugs," as they are called by the natives, that they construct these mounds in a time so short as to be almost incredible. As I looked upon them, which I often did with wonder, I thought, how instructive are the lessons which Nature teaches in her living and universal Book of Truth. So superior to all the powers of description! What a contrast to the indolent habits and supineness of the dark inhabitants of these wilds!

The next day we commenced our return, recognising Finda Fati, Paddy, Anderee, Barsary, Benefit, Carnaby, Cassama, Barra Tendi, Chacondi

Fort, Fata Tendi, and Mammenunkaby. Here the thermometer was at 110° in the shade. Poompatory, Conteen, and Basansary, completed the list of habitable places. At the last we ran ashore, bearing down boughs and limbs of trees which overhung the river's side and knocked one side of the vessel pretty well to pieces. One of our soldiers was capsized into the water, but saved himself by swimming and soon regained the deck. After a frightful scene of confusion, and much trouble and delay, the Steamer made way again, and we reached St. George's about four P.M., having been absent several days, without any one experiencing any ill effects from the heat of steam and sun combined, which, however, proved at times scarcely bearable.

Such was the termination of our intended visit to what is called the Falls, which are nothing more than a slight fall of water capable of being crossed, as I was informed, at seasons without difficulty or danger. We were, naturally, disappointed when so near them, not to be able to prosecute the main object of our undertaking. These sketches, nevertheless, though drawn on the spot amidst bustle and excitement, may perhaps serve a more useful purpose than that of describing mere incident, by affording some information however trivial on a subject little known, because imper-

factly described, or not described at all, by those who have visited the interior so far up the Gambia.

Carefully to explore the river beyond the Falls and ascertain what might be the Mercantile capacities of the country, would thus confirm any previous opinions entertained respecting both the condition and disposition of the people, and the prospect of establishing any permanent and advantageous commerce and intercourse with them. Furthermore, as it is only in the rainy season that a vessel of the tonnage of the *Albert* can get within the desired reach of the Falls, we might have obtained some additional and satisfactory information as to the soundings and other general characters of the river. But our opportunities were sacrificed to the delay which the ill condition of the vessel caused us, and to the many obstacles thrown in our way by the idleness, bad discipline, and ignorance of the crew; who, having no regularly acknowledged master to control them, proved next to useless. As for the state of the craft in respect to her interior condition, nothing could be more filthy and out of order. That *such* a vessel, in *such* a trim, should be suffered to undertake *such* a work, to the endangering the lives and the inconvenience of those who may find it necessary to avail themselves of the use of it, can leave but one impression on the mind of my reader, and that is,

how injudiciously and unjustly Colonial business is often transacted, to the discredit of officials and injury of the common good. For a large annual grant was then allowed, amounting to a considerable sum, for working and keeping this vessel in good repair and condition for the general benefit. It is very well known that the *Albert* had already done the state good service in her unsuccessful expedition up the Niger and that she was condemned; yet is she handed over under these favourable circumstances for the convenience and benefit of the Gambia English Settlements !

Thus, compelled as we were to forego the opportunity of informing ourselves of much that could not fail of being interesting, and probably useful, we lost the chance of extending our observations on the practicability of establishing a better understanding amongst the tribes, and preparing the way for the introduction of civilization and christianity to a race of beings neither indomitable nor unteachable; and who are, at least, numerically powerful, and therefore deserving the care and efforts of a liberal philanthropy. A good night's rest and an early cup of our witty host's aromatic coffee soon dispersed the theoretical visions and philosophical vagaries of the preceding evening. In a Fever country there is nothing like "rising with the lark," although we have not the sweet

quivering notes of that morning songster to greet us, as we put our noses out of our casements. A walk of three or four miles before breakfast, in the dewy coolness of that early hour, braces the system for the endurance of the day's scorching heat. An appetite is provoked (and a hard thing it is to do this in Africa) to masticate the tough beef-steaks or the skimp mutton-chops, fresh from the carcass of the beast just slaughtered: or get a relish for the breakfast beverage, which consists of claret and ale. For these reasons, as well as to see all that was to be seen, I left my good friends where they had disposed themselves the night before, and started off in the true spirit of knight-errantry; but meeting with little that was either novel or interesting, I made amends for my disappointment by despatching a calabash of palm wine, fresh and cool from the tree, and the real thing; which, if not equal to a basin of fresh milk was not by any means an unpalatable substitute.

As our time would not admit of our remaining at St. George's longer than the following morning, provided the steam was up, our kind host—who, by the bye, combines by virtue of his location the duties of the "Excellency" with that of the Commandant—suggested the propriety of paying some compliment to our liberal and hospitable friends, the M'Carthy merchants. Invitations were, accord-

ingly issued without delay ; and that the reception of these Liberals should be on a scale commensurate with the well-known principles of John Bull and Red-coats on such occasions, *foraging* parties were quickly distributed throughout the town to ransack the stores and bring off, at *any cost*, what might be serviceable for the feast.

Soon was St. George's a scene of busy life and occupation, such indeed as rarely occurs in so out of the way a place as M'Carthy's Island. Messengers were running in every direction, as fast as the heat of 118° would allow them, regardless of posts or gutters, shooting out at one door, or rushing in at another. Every one set to in earnest, determined to share in the satisfaction of showing the good folk of these parts what English feeling was. The troops, also, were treated to an Inspection, which our friend the Commandant of the Gambia, already introduced to my readers as "our Nephew," was not so bigoted to Indulgencies as to neglect ; so a strict examination took place of cuffs, belts, collars, and sundry other articles, which come under the important and comprehensive signification of that military term, the "kit."

The reader of these sketches must not be incredulous in perusing these pages, or tax the account of the incidents which they contain as exaggerated. I write as I saw and as I felt at the moment. In

truth, personal experience alone can learn what is to be achieved even in an African clime by dint of a good stomach, cheerful disposition, and an active mind. And who will not admit that the drama of human life, in its ever-varying acts and shifting scenes, if fully known and understood, would be found in its follies and vanities as well as its graver parts, far to supersede what imagination can paint.

And now the hour arrived to do justice to the good fare at the Commandant's table. Perhaps ten such kindred spirits had not before met together at such a distance from civilized mortality and on the banks of the Gambia. We deserved the appellation of Incomparables. And, as there is no small difficulty in obtaining even a few delicacies and luxuries on a short notice in this wild portion of the globe, the present demand for such things called forth the activity and ingenuity of every man to do something *pro bono publico*. For our social intercourse one with the other had proved our digestive powers by practical experiment to be, if not of the cormorant, at all events of the consumptive character. The emergency was, however, successfully met by the energies which were put forth, and the ingenuity which devised the "ways and means" on this memorable occasion.

Whilst the scouts were exploring every hole

and corner of the stores and yards for supplies, those of the travelling Decemviri, who constituted the guests, acted on speculative rather than operative principles. The others took to the *opus operandum*. But, as important undertakings embrace difficulties proportionate to the pleasure or honour sought in them, our host discovered that so original a company of strolling players were not about to be entertained in the vicinity of Covent Garden or precincts of Smithfield; and that his Presidency had this disadvantage in locality, that it was not near Billingsgate nor bordering on Hungerford Market.

The eventful hour came; the bugle sounded the familiar call. The usual compliments paid and customary stomachic taken, which is a glass of wine and bitters, we sat down to dinner. Two porter bottles supplied the want of a better article in the shape of candlesticks, into which the best sperms were forcibly poked. The most was made of a little by the aid of a few original devices.

As the barrack room of a soldier does not very often boast of the carved mahogany or polished rosewood, three or four long-shanked iron mess-tables were ranged together in the piazza, under the superintendence of "our Nephew" and the Adjutant. These were covered over with a swan-white sheet, in place of table-cloths, and forms supplied the



want of air-cushioned chairs. Something like a patent lamp graced the centre of the table, and an old pair of barrack candlesticks were placed right and left of the Vice-President, whose labours were confined to the dissection of an over-grown old Muscovy duck. Our host was more fortunate, for before him was displayed the quarter of an old cow, which his carving abilities enabled him to practise upon to every one's satisfaction. Some odd and ill selected ducks, a few bush chickens and queen's own, or soldier's bacon, made up the substantial. Nor was the vegetable department limited to yams, sweet potatoes, and similar products. The tins of preserved vegetables disclosed their ever acceptable contents, the peas and carrots as usual; but M'Carthy's Island can boast of gardens, which bordering as they do the river's edge, and well manured and watered, yield a variety of light vegetable;—and I partook of some potatoes growing in them of a fair size and well tasted.

Fish is not to be had here, so some soup-meagre was substituted. Our wines were neither badly flavoured, nor was there a complaint made against the malt; and, as our good friends the merchants of the Gambia had laid in a good stock of everything likely to be wanted, our guests were in excellent humour with the fare and welcome.

The cloth being removed, the solitary bugle—

for this was all the music we could boast of—prepared us for the first of all toasts, “The Sovereign of our dear Old England !” and although thousands of miles from its shores a more loyal and hearty “Three times three !”—“Again, and again !” could not come from its Metropolis than on that day made the old wooden walls of the Barracks and bushy wilds of M’Carthy resound with—“The Queen, and God bless her !”

## CHAPTER XII.

FOULAH TENDI AND BANANA TENDI.—SURPRISE OF NATIVES ;  
THEIR MODE OF DRESS.—ACCIDENT.—GAME.—PURCHASES.—  
MARGARURE AND CANABY.—VULTURES.—METHOD OF WORKING  
COTTON INTO THREAD.—GRIS-GRIS, AND OTHER ORNAMENTS ;  
THEIR USE.—WOMEN, AND THEIR STYLE OF DRESS.—IDLE  
HABITS OF NATIVES.—PICTURES.—INTERIOR OF HUTS, AND  
WAY OF LIVING ; FONDNESS FOR WEAPONS ; ALARM OF CHIL-  
DREN.—DANGER FROM HIVING OF BEES.—LONG-TAILED  
MONKEYS.—THE QUISQUALIS.—FURTHER DELAY.—HIPPO-  
POTAMI.—RED-SAND BANK.—BANGARY AND ANDERE.—DOOR  
GRIS-GRIS.—YUAKOY.—GOLD DUST.—SNAKE-BIRD NESTS.—  
BIRDS.—DOG-MONKEYS.—THE CASSIA FISTULA.—TOWNS OF  
PADDI AND FATALI ; MOSQUE, AND INTERIOR OF IT.—SUPER-  
STITIOUS REGARD FOR THE MARABOO BIRDS.—CUNDUM.—PRIZE  
AND SAMAA.—THE STEAMER ON A SAND-BANK.—INSTINCT OF  
THE DOG-MONKEY.—KANTACUNDI AND YABERTENDI.—SPECIES  
OF EAGLE.

As we advanced up the river we came to two more ports, Foulah Tendi, and Banana Tendi. Betwixt these two places are rocks on the right hand and a shelving bank on the left. The river here narrows to little more than forty or fifty yards, and its turnings were intricate and difficult; we could almost touch the overhanging boughs in

passing. A number of Natives had already assembled on the right bank to see us, and offered a curious specimen of grotesque dressing. As many as sixty or seventy had congregated, some with white, others with a kind of blue cloth or cotton vestment, fantastically shaped, as were their caps. Many of them were in a primitive state; and surprise and vacant inquisitiveness seemed to rivet them to the spot whereon they stood. We observed, as we passed, a few apparently running away, disturbed and frightened at the noisy and smoky Leviathan, as she slowly and growlingly paddled up the river.

The country at this part again changes into the more pleasing relief of hill, not very high, gently sloping upwards from the base, consisting of a reddish soil at the sides, rocky at the top, and shaded on the rise, as well as on the summit, by shrubs. Guinea-fowl abound here. The same abruptness in the formation of the elevations may be here noticed as generally prevail.

An accident, and of no trifling kind, had nearly happened to us at this stage of our expedition. Some of the black men employed on the vessel refused to tow the steamer, and the consequence was, that, in the confusion, we shaved a rock, over whose concealed top the water was ominously rippling in playful eddies, not half a foot above

it. At Foulah Tendi we found abundance of partridges and Guinea-fowl of a large size. The former are much more pencilled than the English bird of that kind, much stronger on the wing, and difficult to bring down. We saw, also, a few deer.

I tried to obtain a sword and spear from the natives as curiosities, but they at first refused me. Subsequently I might have purchased the former with its sheath, for four dollars, the original worth being not more than three or four shillings; however, I declined it. They generally make the sword of iron or old blades, and the case of leather variously ornamented. The men and women here are of ordinary size, spare in figure, and not very prepossessing in feature. One of them wore a circlet of beads round his head, in the front of which rose two short white feathers. There is a Factory here.

Margarine was the next place we came to; and, after steaming it into the bush once or twice and having to anchor for the sake of safety, we gained upon Canaby, another village and factory, where we landed for a few minutes. Much of the same style of building and living is to be seen here as in the other places which we passed: the dress varies little. The country is of the same character. We saw a number of large vultures. Near

the landing place is a clump of high palms, amongst which were seated women preparing cotton for the thread.

There were near them, as they sat squatted on the ground, calabashes full of the cotton just as it was gathered from the tree, beautifully white, and cleared of all shell and leaf. From these they take a little at a time, rub their fingers on some chalk, or something like it, and then, fastening it on a finely cut stick about six inches long with a small circular ball at one end, twist this round quickly, and thus lengthen the material into the thread. Gris-gris appeared to be in great request. The men wore them about their ankles as well as their wrists and necks; and the women had them several times crossed over their shoulders and across their unclothed backs like the double belt worn by soldiers. They had also iron and bone rings of much larger size than fitted the parts of the hands and feet on which they were worn. The stools they used to sit upon were very curious, not more than a foot and a half high, and had a small handle attached to them. Some of the women's caps struck me as being more fantastically made than most I had hitherto seen of the kind. There were a few good-looking faces amongst the females, and here and there a fine figure of a man. We went into one of the factory

huts of an oblong form, from the centre of which hung suspended a Gris-gris, composed of feathers bound round with paper exhibiting some Arabic characters, to preserve the premises from robbery or any other injury. In the outer shed of this dwelling, which I suppose they call their piazza, were mats laid upon the ground, on which several of the inmates were reclining, squatting in a sitting posture, with their elbows on their knees and heads on their hands, or lolling against the rude posts which supported the house. It is curious to observe how the poorest and most ragged pride themselves in the possession of a sword, spear, or some sort of weapon. With these people it is ornament as well as a means of defence or aggression. I also observed with agreeable surprise some small pictures stuck on the inner door of this dwelling, a little proof of something English in this wild part of the country; and noticed large holes dug in the ground capable of receiving one or two persons in them. In these the women work the cotton. There was a noble group of palms near the landing-place, and a number of women preparing the article. They were very quiet and good-natured. I offered some colars or money for one of the implements they wound the cotton on with a little of the article as a specimen, but I could not obtain them, not being able to make myself understood,

until one of the merchants spoke to one in the native tongue, at the same time presenting me with what I wanted, to which the owner made no objection. I gave the cotton-worker a collar and thanked her, for which I received a nod of the head, and a smile. Here we saw a number of large vultures. The children only appeared frightened on our entering their cabins, which have little or no furniture. Their beds consist of earth raised about a foot and a half from the ground, the size of a small, single mattress, on which is thrown a mat. On this they sleep without taking off their clothes. I did not observe any aperture for light or air, except the door entrance. The women seemed to be extremely good-tempered, and allowed us to indulge our curiosity in looking at their huts and joking with them, with a singular kind of indifference approaching to apathy. Any little gift, however, would soon animate them into the very opposite extreme of joy and wild laughter. Bees are abundant here and make excellent honey. They are often very troublesome; and should they unfortunately take a fancy for swarming in any part of your vessel, the risk of being stung to the peril of your life can only be avoided by recourse to the greatest patience and forbearance, or an immediate and precipitate flight from the ship. If you attempt to touch or molest them,



woe to you for such an offence ! A great quantity of wax is made of good quality, some of which we saw ready for exportation in its unrefined state, in round, thick pieces.

After passing another village, we anchored. The evening was beautifully clear; and we might, as was the opinion of our mercantile friends who are acquainted with the river, have continued our movements: but the pilot would not advance; and so we were compelled, much against the wishes of the whole party, to remain stationary for awhile. A few small monkeys, of a greyish appearance, with long tails, were the only animals we saw. Although the banks of the river did not change much here, yet the windings of it were diversified; and the *Quisqualis*, thickly interspersed with the other variety of shrub and wood, and pendant flowers, were charming. To-day the heat became almost intolerable; and the removal of the awning by order of the timid pilot, who said the vessel could not be steered safely unless it was taken away, left us in the situation of persons incarcerated in an oven !

We commenced early the towing system again, and at a most wretchedly wearying rate; but owing to bad steerage had proceeded a very little way before we were shot right into the shrubs which lined the banks. The cause of this

delay, so tedious, and in my opinion inexcusable, deserves public reprehension; because the great objects of scientific inquiry, local information, and mercantile advantage have, I fear, lost much by it. We amused ourselves meanwhile as well as we could; and our lingering was somewhat relieved by the appearance of several huge Hippopotami. At these monsters of the water and the land repeated shots were fired but in vain; although it was thought we hit one or two of them. But their broad tough-hided necks seemed to mock the deadly instruments of death levelled at them, although in many instances with close aim.

On the right side of us we soon perceived a sand-bank of a reddish appearance, said to be only about two or three feet below the surface of the water. It gradually shelved off at a short distance, and soon lost itself in the depth. We were now but a few miles from M'Carthy's Island.

I cannot help suspecting the pilot was unequal to his duty from unnecessary timidity. So close did we once get to the shore that we were able to gather branches from the trees on the banks; and in one of our *bolting adventures* some of the bulwarks were forced off.

Once more we attempted the steaming power, but with no better success. After advancing a

little distance we renewed the old story and quietly rested in the shade of the trees !

The river at this spot becomes more serpentine, continues to deepen and is safely navigable, presenting little difficulty to the pilot or steersman, if firm and careful, save in one or two spots from the limbs of trees which the rains have uprooted. And this applies as a practical difficulty to the paddle only, and close upon the bank.

We next passed Bangary, a small factory consisting of a few huts, but did not go ashore. Andere was the next town we came to, and here some of us landed. Nothing, however, of novelty offered itself. I tried to purchase some Gris-gris, but could not ; and in order to try the temper and feeling of the Natives one of our party took one of them. It was about the size of half a sheet of paper doubled, and had Arabic characters written upon it, being fastened to a thin stick. It hung over the door. For a little while the owner treated the pretended spoliation with good humour, but an old man whispering to him, he grew angry and demanded the article, which otherwise, I believe, he would have parted with. The huts here seemed to be neater and more comfortable. I inspected the interior of two or three of them : they were well swept, and appeared to be cool ; and in one of them there was an improvement in the

sleeping department. Something of a low bedstead raised about three feet from the ground, with a mat on it was to be seen. In a corner of the hut as well as at the entrance were several kinds of Gris-gris of different shapes, swords, guns, powder-flask, and shooting bags. The front shed showed more than common neatness, being edged round with large stones, and nicely matted. In a hammock lay a young native girl, of pleasing countenance, who gave no further proof of surprise or disconcertment at our approach than a stare and a smile. Her neck was covered with different kinds of beads of various sizes. But the largest and more numerous were of a yellowish colour. Gris-gris and rings of ivory, brass, and steel alternately graced her arms and ankles; and she continued without attempting to rise to swing herself backward and forward and look at us. Here, as in all the other ports, one or two large trees point out and fix the factory and town, which are more inland and generally at some distance off.

Yuakoy is the next port. Here gold dust was some time since collected and sent to England; but the preponderance of alloy with it rendered it unprofitable. We saw amongst the branches some nests, which were said to be those of the Snake-bird. They were large, had a small aperture near to

the bottom of them for the bird to go in and out, and were so built as to protect them from the surprise and attacks of that reptile. Flocks of cranes with their spotless white plumage and arched necks; wild fowl of the duck species with black plumage, and a kind of plover and other birds, either sat thickly together on the verdant branches, or winged their flight over the calm green surface of the still, clear water, as we glided by. But the most curious and novel natural curiosity, with which we were amused, was the Dog Monkey. They are very numerous here where the land gets higher, of a large size, as high as four feet, strong, and extremely mischievous. We could plainly see them sporting on the branches on the summit of the hill; and the noise which they make is frequent, continued, and so nearly imitating the bark of the animal from which they are named, that, unless acquainted beforehand with the fact, a person would suppose the canine and not the monkey race frequented the woods. The tinting and shades of the foliage grew more beautiful as we advanced: and the Cassia Fistula, nearly resembling our laburnum, with what appeared also to be a species of Willow on the banks, gave to the scenery a charm of no ordinary character.

Paddy and Findi Fatali are the other ports which we passed, having much the appearance of those already described. At the last-mentioned place we anchored for the night. Some of our party went ashore, and two walked to the town, distant about five miles, where they saw a Mosque, into which they entered, having first obtained permission of the priest, who with a light showed them the interior. But there was nothing remarkable in it. Our friends informed us they wanted to obtain some Maraboo birds, which they saw there, but could not procure them, as the natives here value them even to a superstitious degree. Cundum is the name of the town, inland, attached to Findi Fatali, and contains a large population.

We left the last place very early, steaming it better than we had done ever since we left the Gambia; but after passing a place called Prye, and getting beyond Samaa, another factory port, on the right, our hopes of reaching the Falls were at an end; for, in a moment, the pilot with all his great care and caution, lodged the notorious *Albert* on a sand bank, nearly central in the river, which the most inexcusable negligence and carelessness only could have overlooked. Fortunately for us she struck on no

hard substance; or, in the wretched and unsafe condition she was in, she must have been lost, and the main object of our undertaking defeated at the very close of its accomplishment. So much for giving a Condemned Vessel to a Colony for public use, and then not employing the money allowed annually for keeping it in repair either in time or to its fullest extent!

The land again changed into the bolder outline of hill on the left, and was of a reddish kind of soil, with rock verging inland suddenly and breaking off in a rather precipitous manner. A great number of monkeys, of larger size than we had hitherto seen, were playing on the boughs, one of which a ball from a rifle brought to the ground. But, although a boat was instantly despatched to procure the animal, we could not get it; for its companions had taken the body away. This they are reported to do, and afterwards bury it, letting it remain until the carcase becomes putrid, when they make a good repast of it. The attempt to remove one of these creatures when shot is attended with considerable danger, unless you are accompanied by a strong party. The depth of the river lessened at this part of it, yet remained quite answerable to all the purposes of navigation.

Agreeably to arrangements made the preceding evening to boat it to the Falls we started by break of day for the wished-for spot of our inquiry, leaving the ill-managed and dirty Steamer for a few hours for the dear-earned enjoyment of good rowing, fresh air, and the anticipation, notwithstanding successive obstacles, of yet attaining the point for which we set out.

Here the river alternately widens and very irregularly contracts, still preserving a navigable depth for vessels of good size. In some parts the banks, on the left, had fallen into the river, carrying with them the trees and shrubs, and thus throwing into relief the water by scattered up-shootings of the trunks, whose weight had sunk them to its bed. We saw plenty of wild fowl, particularly duck, of a black colour; and one of our companions informed us that they nearly resemble the English bird of the like species in form and flavour. Kantacundi and Yabertendi are Factory Ports which we successively passed.

It was, truly, an exhilarating sight to steal along the surface of the Gambia's stream between two richly studded banks of never-failing verdure, marking the freedom-flight of the fairy birds that



sported over its blue-green surface, or the bolder flight of a species of eagle, remarkable for strength of body, rapidity of pinion, and the peculiarly turned shape of its wing, which curves upward, as round and round in mazy circle, betwixt sky and earth, it darts its penetrating glance beneath for prey.

## CHAPTER XIII.

THE 24TH OF MAY; PREFATORY REFLECTIONS; BATTERY SALUTE IN HONOUR OF THE DAY.—M'CARTHY'S SQUARE.—THE BARRACKS; THEIR GENERAL APPEARANCE: GARRISON CLOCK; LOOP-HOLES; GUNPOWDER MAGAZINE; PARADE, AND FEU DE JOIE.—THE STAFF.—VISIT TO FORT BULLEN; THE FORT.—WANT OF A FOSSE.—MANDINGO VILLAGES; METHOD OF FORTIFYING AND FENCING THEM.—COTTON PRODUCE.—MONKEY TREES.—WESLEY CHAPEL AND MINISTER'S HOUSE.—BIRDS; GAME.—GOVERNMENT HOUSE AT ST. MARY'S.—PREPARATIONS FOR DINNER.—ODD CHARACTERS.—THE DINNER.—FIREWORKS.—SPEECHES.—SLIGHT MISTAKES.—THE MAN OF MODESTY.—CURIOSITY.—CLOSE OF THE EVENING.

It is not in the mother country only that English loyalty is a national feeling and national sentiment inseparable from the national character; throughout her colonies and dependencies, wherever the flag of John Bull is unfurled, his patriotism and fidelity to the throne are unvaryingly the same. In the most distant portions of the globe, in the remotest parts of habitable life, let the circle of European society be circumscribed as it may, the devoted attachment of the Sons of the White Cliffs will show itself in some way on their Sovereign's birth-day.

This feeling and sentiment cannot be smothered or suppressed by political party, religious difference, or any other comparatively inferior considerations : it would be madness to try to stifle it—its pulse beats strong in every breast where English influence is appreciated, and English loyalty rightly understood ; but never more warmly than on the return of that auspicious morn which chronicles our Sovereign's birth !

Nor was it wanting in existence or animation to the inhabitants of St. Mary's on the 24th of May. At an early hour the town was in lively commotion ; and the first indications of respect were the flags which might be seen hoisted from every mast in the harbour and every staff in the town as soon as the sun had risen. How loyalty operates in a physical manner on other men's bodies as well as hearts, I know not, but on me it produced a singular effect ; and our Nephew's system appeared to sympathise with mine. The Commandant's ale and beef-steaks, notwithstanding a good basting of an hour would have considerably improved them, paid the penalty of gastric irritation, occasioned by the cannon's roar ; for the guns had been well worked before breakfast in firing a royal salute. The effect of gun-powder is unquestionably astonishing, being no respecter of things or persons. The old walls of the rampart on which

they were raised, and which was wretchedly constructed, shook and cracked at the vibration, as if they would have tumbled to the ground in honour of the royal natal day. The branches of the trees waved up and down at the sound; nor did they leave off their agitation until the white curling smoke alone, rolling itself gradually and gracefully away, left the artillery to its heavy and wonted quietness.

It is impossible to describe as I could wish, and as they deserve to be mentioned, the extraordinary excitement and odd exhibition of feeling which manifest themselves amongst the inhabitants of a small and retired colony such as Bathurst, when quickened into full play. All kinds and sorts of humanity seem to be impelled by one common and simultaneous movement to the scene of operations, the public square. Blacks and Whites, Daddees and Mammees, Pickaninnies of every age and size, were to be seen flocking together to make as well as hear a great noise and see the grand Palaver. Although I have already alluded to this part of the town, some further particulars respecting it may not prove uninteresting; and I shall confine my observations chiefly to the residence of the Soldiers. The general appearance of the Barracks is imposing and being built of white stone has a striking effect. They are of an oblong form,

and consist of a long range of apartments, surrounded with a spacious piazza and built over the quarters occupied by the soldiers. The entrance to it is through an arched doorway, to the left of which is the Orderly Room, a small apartment but poorly fitted for transacting business. The interior is a good sized yard, and the men's rooms are comfortable. The officers' quarters are also very tolerable, but not equal to those at Free-town. Over the portal rises a cupola, not badly constructed, which is placed in the centre of the building, and from the interior of this is suspended a large bell, which is serviceable on all occasions, whether they are sad or joyous. It sounds the alarm in case of fire, summons the good people to Church, or rather Divine service, for there is at present, as I have said, no edifice of that kind, and tolls the departed to their last earthly resting place. But the most original and singular features in this notable building are the Clock and the Loop-holes. The former may receive, according to custom, the appellation of a time-piece, but a time-server it is not; for it has only one face, and that looks externally from the barracks towards the square, so that in order to know where the old chronicler is pointing his iron hands, the men must go out of their quarters and stand in the



middle of the road, up to their knees in sand, to know the hour of the day.

The Loop-holes afford another happy specimen of what original ingenuity and simple ideas may accomplish. No doubt the architect had an eye to the service and was desirous of facilitating the destruction of the troops, did the spirit of War stalk forth in Gambia; for those apertures are formed in the very reverse manner in which they ought to be. An enemy from without could make his observations quietly enough by looking down into the barrack-yard and could fire on the soldiers within at little risk, for they are placed low and so sheltered as to allow of the assailants being well under cover. Some of those Loop-holes look into the wine cellar and kitchen, and, as they front the road, too many opportunities, it is to be feared are thus given for taking liberties with other people's good things, which the utmost vigilance of the best officer cannot always anticipate or prevent. It would be a very good plan to close them up altogether and make new ones, if they are really wanted. It is no agreeable promenade in fine, dry weather to walk by the barracks, through the loose and burning sand; but when the rains prevail I should be exceedingly sorry to hazard the consequences of getting too near the building; for the

spouts which convey the water off the top of the barracks, sloping as they do horizontally from the parapets of the flat roof, promise an abundant sprinkling on those who accidentally get within their reach. The piazza of this edifice is paved with brick, and rises over circular arches, through whose open spaces the air has free access to the officers' rooms ; and a corridor of similar construction forms the body of the building. But this long range of masonry would wear a heavy appearance were it not relieved by the quadrangular turret, and the old weather cock which is displayed upon it.

Strange to say, not far from the barracks, between the battery and room which is set apart for public worship, the Gunpowder Magazine has been erected. A solitary bayonet guards this precious deposit of combustible matter. Should some mischievous practitioner in wholesale murder, contrive to get the upper hand of a red-coat, and force in the door in one of those fits of madness not uncommon in places where the brain is so affected by solar heat, Bathurst, and all that belongs to it, would most assuredly take their departure for that "undiscovered country from whose bourne no traveller returns." Nay, a touch or two of electric magnetism might, "Jove tonante," carry out the



principles of emigration more extensively and expeditiously than would be agreeable to her Majesty's subjects at St. Mary's, and leave little cause for complaining of a surplus population !

At twelve o'clock the troops of the garrison, to the number of about a hundred, marched into the square, and paid the usual honours to Royalty, to the delight of the spectators, who by their vociferations and gestures increased the uproar and confusion of the scene. The soldiers looked healthy and were in capital trim, and went through their evolutions in a manner highly creditable to themselves and officers. Some of them were remarkably fine, handsome, manly looking fellows. It would be withholding what is justly due to the Commandant not to state, that the discipline of the troops, and their cleanly appearance, are the results of his experience and clever drill. But good training can only be obtained from a thorough knowledge and practical acquaintance with all the minutiae of the profession, and these are best learnt in our military schools. The importance to the service is evident which is derivable from stationing prudent and judicious, if not talented officers to command in such places as Bathurst, where they are entirely thrown on their own resources, and dependent on their own skill and



discernment, not only in the every-day and common-place routine of official business, but on occasions of delicacy and emergency, when the nicest discrimination and most prompt decision are required at a moment's notice.

The Staff which attended the parade did not muster very strong, nor make a very showy display, and consisted of merely the Small Part of the Commissariat and his Clerk, together with a tall, lean-looking, and lanky Doctor. Our friend Bumptious, however, was particularly military that day in his cocked hat and tightly-buttoned blue coat, which, although set off with a pair of epaulettes out of all proportion, nevertheless became the fat little fellow exceedingly well. The towering Adjutant was in his glory, galloping about the field of operation in gallant style, but not to the satisfaction of the poor beast he rode, which, from his hard blowing and puffing, seemed to labour harder than even his loyal rider in the cause of Royalty! The *feu de joie* went off very well; only a few of the novices at it shut their eyes. Pop! pop! pop! one after another, and steady! Hats off, and the old style! Two or three turns up and down the square; and this part of the day's show is over!

My good friends the Commandant and Adju-

tant having returned from their duties, and performed their ablutions, made no objection to a cold chicken and glass of Bass's best. But, the luncheon despatched, what was to be done until seven o'clock, the hour for the diplomatic dinner? Fort Bullen's flag was flying gaily in the wind, and seemed to invite us over to give the occupants of the fortification a greeting. The Commandant popped the question, which was readily answered in the affirmative, and before half an hour had elapsed we were, with one or two more of the garrison, making for the opposite shore. About an hour's good rowing takes you across the river to the fort, which rears its dark and solitary walls on the edge of the water, and at an extremity of the land. Away we go! sail up, and gliding charmingly over the water, or feathering our oars admirably cheered by the lively voices of the boatmen, singing their native and well-known song. "Oars up!" "Gently!" "Now for it!" A good spring over the boat's prow and we are safely landed! And see! an old face, familiar to me, is hastening to welcome us! A Red-coat, too! So much the better! Past times are talked over; strange stories told. This spot, for the most part so still, resounds with our roars of laughter; and the little garrison is all life and bustle.

The fort is well built, and strong, bounded on one side by the river and on the other by the sea, having two towers at each angle of the side pointing towards Bathurst, and a parapet, with some guns mounted on it. In the event of an insurrection of the Natives, it would no doubt hold out until reinforcements were sent over from the opposite shore; but a fosse, which it wants at present, would strengthen it considerably, and make it much less assailable. One officer, and a small complement of men, who are occasionally relieved, occupy this garrison. The quarters of the former are small, but comfortable; and for economising it is a capital retirement; for little is to be had except what is sent across from St. Mary's; and there are few temptations to spend money — a great advantage to a poor subaltern.

I was much pleased to meet at the fort, amongst the soldiers, some of my old pupils, who were very glad to see me. They had been formerly in the Adult School of the garrison at New Providence.

The country as you advance inland gets very woody, and possesses some fine timber; indeed almost up to the water's edge, so luxuriantly does everything grow there and so rapidly, Nature is bountiful in this respect. Not to lose an oppor-

tunity of exploring as much as possible around us, we walked to the nearest Mandingo villages, which consist, like the others described, of huts similarly constructed. But the manner in which these people intrench themselves for security against external aggression, and fence out the leopards and other enemies to which they are exposed, is well deserving attention. Whoever observes the care and cautious method pursued by them in this respect, as well as the foresight displayed and the skill shown in erecting their palisades, will soon perceive that, after all, they are not so deficient in ability, as might be, and is generally, considered to be the case.

The palisades are doubly formed of strong and sharp stakes driven crossways, like *cheveaux de frise*, into the ground, and of such a height as almost to preclude the possibility of any animal clearing them. A space of a few feet is then left, and another row of palisades is fixed in the earth, so that in case of a beast of prey succeeding in getting over the first fence, he would be stopped by the second, over which he could not spring for want of room to make his spring. And as to any attack from the neighbouring tribes, or commotion amongst their own people, unless taken by surprise, or burnt out, they could carry on a desperate and

protracted resistance from within their intrenchments. Here, as in other parts which we visited, we saw many of the natives engaged in preparing the cotton for spinning; some clearing the raw material just as it was gathered; others working it through its second process and winding it off for use. There was a great quantity of the article, and it appeared to be of a good quality. The people here seemed to be quietly disposed, and to care very little about us, as we passed on, or stopped to look at them at their work, scarcely condescending to return our salute. I observed several noble trees felled, for the purpose, as supposed, of building; perhaps for making canoes, which are formed out of the solid trunk, and with a neatness and dexterity which are astonishing.

The Monkey trees here are very numerous and grow to a large size. There were some close to the Fort, near the river's bank, which had large holes in them made by cannon ball, shot at them, I presume, for practice. Some of these were in the body of the trees; others had passed through them. I am at a loss to know why these trees bear the name they do, except that they supply food, or shelter, probably both, to the animal of that name.

At no great distance from the Fort, and parallel

to the banks of the river, near to which it is erected, is a Wesleyan Chapel, to which is attached a small dwelling-house. But there is no vestige whatever of any efforts on the part of our Church Establishment to do any thing for the spiritual welfare of the people of this part of the Gambia. It is greatly to be deplored that a field of ministerial usefulness so extensive ; that a vast territory bordering, as it does, upon an English settlement, where English administration is recognized, should be so neglected and thus left victims to the dark powers of superstition and idolatry ! Far better would it be, and infinitely more conducive to the advancement of civilization and religion, if, instead of making Lions of the ordained Natives in Freetown, by putting them in desks and pulpits, which do not require their labours, the society to which they belong and by whom they are patronized, would bestow their services on those who are unprovided, and likely to be unprovided, unless some step of the kind be taken, with the means of useful and religious knowledge. Let it not be supposed that by these observations I am depreciating the value of Native ministerial agency, or reflecting upon the distinction, broad as it is, which exists between the European and the African. But Native Missionaries are wanted much more up the

Gambia and in the interior, than in the Metropolis of Sierra Leone. I have listened with satisfaction to the preaching of a man as black as my coat, and never did I hear a more clear elucidation of Scripture, more orthodox doctrine, more logical argument, more simple persuasive exhortation than from that minister; his discourse far exceeded my powers to compete with him; and I mention this to do away with any false ideas which my remarks may lead captious persons in Sierra Leone and elsewhere to form from them on this subject. The Native Missionary is best adapted to contend with those difficulties of locality and climate, which must be anticipated by those who extend their ministerial labours far inland; and, moreover, he possesses facilities for his work, as belonging to the country, to which the European cannot pretend. To make stars of such men, by constituting them fixtures in Free-town, is, to say the least, a very great sacrifice.

Whilst at Fort Bullen we did not see many birds, but there is game; and deer may be occasionally found by walking far enough for it. Our stay, however, was limited, and the time for our returning to St. Mary's was hastened too quickly by the pleasant manner in which we passed it. Accordingly, we took leave of our friend at the

Fort, and, stepping into the boat, were soon at St. Mary's. We were not long in making our toilets, and mounting our horses; our Nephew, the Adjutant, and myself, proceeded at an aristocratic walk to Government House, which had already begun to blaze with luminaries of all descriptions.

Not so bad, after all, the Residence of representative sovereignty! Its situation is good, standing as it does between the barracks and the hospital. Protection and relief on all sides! The lancet and the bayonet! gunpowder and Seidlitz powder! grape shot and gripe shot! For a coat of arms in heraldry, modern hospital bearings, death's head and cross bones! Then there is the full expanse of sea before it, with Fort Bullen in the distance, indistinctly visible through the mist that is gathering about it! A wall of three or four feet and neat railing enclose the entrance to Government House, which is approached by a broad and handsome flight of stone steps. The building is of stone, and makes a good show with its broad piazza and jalousies, which are painted green. But, with the exception of the dining-room, not much can be said in favour of the other apartments. Although superior to the diplomatic abode at Sierra Leone in external appearance and



interior arrangements, it is, at the best, but a poor specimen of architectural taste and judgment.

We had hoped to have been the first amongst the guests, but found on entering the piazza that we had been anticipated by the arrival of three or four of the company who were enjoying a *tête-à-tête* conversation with his Honour. Feasts, such as those to which we had the honor of being invited on this occasion, are serious undertakings in a climate such as Africa, and in a place like St. Mary's. All was managed, however, exceedingly well. The piazza was well lit up. The receiving apartment presented quite the appearance of an English drawing-room, with its sofas, ottomans, mirrors, and carpeted floor. The table was set off with a gay cloth, on which were to be seen a variety of periodicals and papers: facetious "Punch," the inimitable "Illustrated London News," "The Times," besides a large assortment of light reading, gaily bound, duly arranged for the occasion.

The company now began to muster fast, and the piazza was filling with red and blue coats, gilt crowned buttons and gaudy epaulettes, which glittered in the artificial light. Servants were tumbling against one another; the mansion was within and without like a hive of bees; it was one incessant humming of voices; and what wonder

when every one that could be was there ! At last the bugle sounded the welcome invitation, and his Honour leading the way, some thirty honest guests followed him to the dining-room.

A plain bronze chandelier, suspended from the unfinished ceiling by an ancient crimson cord of silk, supplied four luminaries, and wax candles profusely dispersed about the room assisted to turn night into day. D'Oylys, neatly folded up and ticketed, showed where every one was to sit. The table literally groaned beneath the weight of the good things which were provided for the feast ; and I suspect St. Mary's had not witnessed such a brilliant display for a long while. The drums and fifes, accompanied by bugles, did their best to supply the deficiency of a regular band ; and at any rate, if they did not please with the sweetness and melody of their music, they rattled and piped away at some of the old national tunes, which did one's heart good to hear in such an outlandish part of the world, whilst we were endeavouring to show his Honour that we properly appreciated his liberality and taste. Every thing was conducted in the best style and order : a London confectioner could not have surpassed "Black-man" in the choice and arrangement of both substantials and delicacies. The ticketing system

proved its usefulness by the ease with which every one found his place, and the disappearance of one thing after another from the table; the incessant movement of the decanters backwards and forwards, and up and down the festive board, together with the smiles which brightened every countenance, told how loth we were to quit it. I was so fortunate as to be well located near a respectable and intelligent official, the Colonial Surgeon, in whom I found an agreeable and communicative companion. Nothing tends more to spoil the enjoyment of such a party than a stupid or ill-behaved neighbour; yet it not unfrequently happens you find next to you such an animal, who either wearies you with his prosiness, or annoys you with his teasing attentions. To tell the honest truth, and without wishing to be thought unkindly severe on faces and manners (for who has not his peculiarities?), I could not help inwardly desiring that my lot might not be cast near to, or between two or three of the guests present on that occasion. Common law and quackery, as well as common lawyers and quacks, are disagreeable things; they are difficult of explanation, and dangerous to be trusted, inasmuch as you are almost sure to be robbed or ruined by the one, and poisoned or cruelly tortured by the other.

It was, therefore, with some anxiety that I feared lest I might be handed over to the companionship of two personages, who certainly were not to be mistaken for any other than sons of the quill and lancet. The Lawyer was unceasing in his disquisition on the excellence of honesty and integrity, and the body-healer never strayed from one subject in his conversation, which turned continually upon development. It did not signify to what the topic had reference; for with the disciple of Esculapius nothing could be treated or brought to a successful issue without his theory of development. In practical as well as experimental philosophy, every thing was to be developed. It was scarcely possible to refrain from laughing at the odd use he made of the word on all occasions. His general appearance, too, poor fellow, was that which would have led you to take him for Shakspeare's apothecary, so meagre were his looks. It was evident he had not been educated and fed among London aldermen. But his deep attention to the toilette, although rather not in character with his bodily qualifications, for a very thin leg and a large foot would have appeared to better advantage, had they not been cased in a pair of inexpressibles too tight and short. His white cravat, which was tied to suffo-

cation, made a large head look much larger; and his coat, which was of doubtful black, would have been a perfect fit had not the measure of it been curtailed. I was nevertheless glad to see the face of this chirurgical oddity assume what I suspect it rarely did, a rosy hue, and his dull, deep set eye, brighten with the genial influence of the grape, which he relished like one unaccustomed to such good fare every day. To see others happy is surely happiness itself; and for once in his life this man of development exhibited all the external tokens of a heart and mind at ease, and a stomach full!

My reader must be informed, lest he believe these portraits nothing more than fictitious, that we have our Odd Fellows as well as our Odd Acts on the Coast. England is not singular in this respect; and Englishmen, no less than Natives, are capable of strange peculiarities and eccentricities. As might be expected in such a locality and on such an occasion, our company displayed many various and singular traits of character; for we were not limited to Heads of Departments, but composed a mixed assembly. The Lawyer and the Doctor were, at the same time, the stars of the evening, besides the Deputy-President, who was inimitable in his way. The man of briefs and

cases took his wine, looked aristocratically thoughtful as he tasted it, and passed judgment in its favour without any reservation or disposition to reverse his decisions on its purity and goodness. The son of Esculapius also admitted with a shake of the head, that its flavour was *fully developed*, according to the rules of correct taste. I was highly amused to observe the proofs which these personages gave to one another of their mutual good fellowship by the "nutu signisque," with which they pledged each other over the friendly bumper. But the Lawyer had been more delicately fed, and was the taller and larger body of the two. It, therefore, required on the part of the Doctor, some expansion of the neck and elevation of the head to get a fair look at him when the glass was replenished, and this he did with such an arch smile of happy contentedness, as could leave no possible doubt of his extreme felicity.

The table-cloth at length being removed, the leading toast of the evening was proposed and responded to with all the usual expressions of loyalty. The drums and fifes struck up the National Anthem, and the bugles harmonized as well as they could in concert with them. The cheering from the diplomatic table was responded to from without by the lookers-on who crowded the Piazza.

At the same moment, under the management of an important little Superintendent of Artillery, who was employed to teach the Black idea how to shoot, and could always be distinguished from others by the dirty pair of large magnifying reflectors placed across his nose, his native strut, and one arm, a blaze of fireworks contributed to give effect to the simultaneous burst of feeling which accompanied the toast; sky-rockets, one after another, shot forth their brilliant arches of fire into the air; and again the cannon's roar from the old battery was heard above the shouts of the multitude and rejoicings of the guests. The little Doctor never ceased thumping the table so long as the hurrahs continued, and the honest Lawyer ceased not to utter his cry of exultation "Hear, hear!" whilst the uproar lasted. The Deputy-President, raised upon half-a-dozen cushions to enable him to contend with the difficulties of carving the greater part of a sheep, behind which he was scarcely visible, rose on his tiptoes and put forth the full power of his lungs to join the discord. The doors and windows were besieged with the different branches of his Honour's household, led by curiosity to witness the proceedings and hear the speeches delivered at the banquet. "Navy and Army," "Church and State," followed in order,

with a number of individual toasts ; nor were the Ladies forgotten, for whom, however, a deputy was obliged to get on his legs, as the senior Benedict of the company, one of quiet, unobtrusive manners, "unaccustomed to speak," was unequal to the task of talking publicly to "Ladies and Gentlemen !" Our little Deputy-President was a total stranger to this kind of modesty, and procuring a stool whereon to elevate himself, declaimed in the first style, until slipping off his rostrum he disappeared, either from, or under, the table. He soon after reappeared to return thanks for his own health, which had been drunk during his absence ; and this duty he performed to the "best of his ability and power," enlarging on his own demerits and the kindness of his friends, who had "done him so much honour !"

It was altogether a pleasant evening ; every one appeared to appreciate the hospitality of the acting governor, who certainly spared no exertion to make the party an agreeable one. The wines were excellent, and the guests did justice to their good quality without, I am happy to say, going beyond the bounds of moderation. In short, but for the dark faces about us, we might have fancied ourselves without any great effort of the imagination, at home, and in Old England. The conversation was animated and well kept up, until our host gave



notice to quit, at a reasonable hour, when we all followed him to the drawing-room, where tea and coffee were in readiness for us. Those who preferred the aromatic weed betook themselves to the piazza; some made for the whist table, and others contented themselves with looking over the magazines and journals, or getting into the corners of the room to enjoy a chat in quiet over their coffee. The Commandant and myself, having paid our respects to his Honour, unobservedly made our retreat, very well satisfied with our entertainment, and glad to escape the worst and most disagreeable part of such an entertainment—the last scene or the close of it.

## CHAPTER XIV.

VISIT TO THE CAPE; THE RIDE; TICK BIRDS; OYSTER CREEK; FERRY AND FERRYMAN; MAROON HOUSE; COTTAGE IN THE BUSH; HOUSES AT THE CAPE: CAPE OR HEALTH HOUSE; ITS RUINOUS CONDITION; HOSPITALITY; RIDE TO SABBIGEE, A VILLAGE IN THE INTERIOR; CULTIVATION OF LAND; BEEHIVES; MOSQUE; ROUGH RECEPTION BY THE PRIEST AND VILLAGERS; NARROWNESS OF STREETS; LARGE MONKEY TREES: STORY OF THE LEGS OF MUTTON; MANDINGO CHIEF.—RETURN TO ST. MARY'S THROUGH THE SWAMPS; COOS-COOS LUNCHEON; VISIT TO MR. —'S COUNTRY HOUSE UP THE RIVER; MANGROVES; OYSTERS GROWING ON THEM; VIEW OF ST. MARY'S FROM THIS SPOT; VILLAGE AT NIGHT; MIDNIGHT AMUSEMENTS.—RETURN TO BATHURST.—DEPARTURE FOR SIERRA LEONE.

THE kindness and hospitality of my friends at St. Mary's during my visit knew no bounds. Dinner-parties and excursions succeeded one another without intermission. To the former they give the name of "second breakfasts," but they may just as well call them "early suppers," for they commence about two o'clock, and are kept up until the guests find neither time nor inclination to do anything but arrange some plan for the next day's amusement. Maroons, however, are

very pleasant trips of pleasure, if you have agreeable company, and in this respect, I am sure, we had no reason for complaint, and two capital ones were got up whilst I was at the Gambia.

The first of these was at the Cape, a good two hours' brisk riding from St. Mary's. Our Marooners mustered strong, five or six in number, and were suitably equipped for dashing through bush and brake, and wading through swamps and the like delightful places. Our ride was exhilarating in the extreme, and as we did not move over the ground at a snail's pace, we were not long in accomplishing our journey.

The country, for the most part, was flat and open, with plenty of bush growing about it, and some woodland. The road in general was very heavy owing to the depth and continuance of the sand, and tried our horses' metal. Cattle were seen straying about, cropping the scant grass, and feeding with more satisfaction on the luxuriant bush which yields them a superabundant and acceptable meal.

Perched upon these animals, which did not seem in the least to mind them, were a species of birds called "Tick-birds," from the circumstance of their feeding upon certain insects of that name, which they find in great numbers on these beasts. They were about the size of our thrush, and of a

bright brown colour, intermixed with black and red, and to be seen not only on the back of the animal, but clinging to his sides and under his stomach. These birds are more elegantly formed than that to which I have compared them and will let you approach almost within arm's length.

Some parts of our road were scarcely passable on account of the tangling brushwood and briars, which nearly left it traceless, and bordered on the edge of the high ground which overhung the sea-shore; but these trifling impediments only seemed to give fresh impulse to our movements. Our horses were sure-footed, and so forward we cantered, cheering one another so as to fill the welkin with our shouts, until we suddenly found ourselves again in the open country, and close to the Oyster Creek, a branch of the sea which extends itself some distance inland. There is a ferry there by which men and horses are conveyed across this inlet, which is of considerable breadth. For this accommodation you pay sixpence or a shilling, which the Dark Ferryman takes care you do not forget. Government officers on duty are exempt. For amusement, myself and those of our party who could not honestly plead public business as an exemption from the tax, pretended to evade the impost. Leave Black man alone, however, when the Queen's silver is at stake. He was not to be

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bilked so easily, and declared it but fair that we should obey regulations, as we were not travelling on Her Majesty's, but our own pleasure. At this point of the land there is a small house thatched and boarded, and a cupboard in the corner of the room in the old English fashion where all the necessities for the table are kept ready for those who like now and then to ruralize and feast on Native Oysters, which are plentiful and very well flavoured, so that you may, if so disposed, pass a few hours in the day very pleasantly and harmlessly. Saturday is the favourite day for Marooning, when you will generally find the Oyster Creek enlivened by some visitors.

Having rested our horses and tasted some of these shell-fish we had ourselves and beasts ferried over the water, and made the best of our way to the Cape. Between the Oyster Creek and this last-mentioned place is an exceedingly pretty little snuggerly belonging to one of the residents at St. Mary's. It is in the cottage style; and has a most excellent kitchen-garden as well as some tastefully laid-out pleasure grounds fenced in around it, thus proving how much may yet be effected in Africa by perseverance and industry, not merely in making an oasis in the desert, but in directing the Native mind and energies to the proper use and improvement of such resources as have

been bestowed upon it by Nature. There is some very fine timber scattered about the country; and the windings of the road, the sudden breaks and openings of the woods through which you have to pass, and the intricacies of the bush, all combine to make the ride to the Cape a romantic one. The unexpected manner in which you at once open upon this spot is very striking; and you are still more agreeably surprized, if you have never visited this spot before, to find it is very far from being so desolate a wilderness as you might have supposed. There are two exceedingly pretty cottages, one built by the present Governor of the Gambia, and the other by a gentleman of the colony, not more than a few yards distant from each other, which, with a kind of Health-house for the sick and invalided soldiers to recruit in, give an appearance of habitable life to the spot. These residences are close upon the sea-shore, and get all the benefit of the sea breeze which continually blows upon them.

Two of our kind friends at St. Mary's had already anticipated our arrival, and made preparations for us at the Governor's cottage, where they were stopping for a few days, and which reminded you of one of those charming little retreats which you meet with sometimes in England in the retired parts of the country. It was raised

a few feet from the ground, and neatly paved with brick, consisting of three comfortable rooms on a line with one another; the study, the dining-room, and a sleeping-apartment, with the usual out-houses. Everything was in perfect agreement with the size and style of the cottage, and I think I could have passed a few weeks there as contentedly as at my favourite resort at Godrich in Sierra Leone. After an agreeable afternoon spent with our friends, and amusing ourselves in various ways, as fancy and inclination prompted, we took up our quarters at the Health-house or Cape-house as it is more generally called, where we found ample and capital accommodation for man and horse. Here, as in similar buildings in Sierra Leone, no expense appears to have been spared to render them comfortable and convenient; yet, for want of timely repairs, parts of the edifice were falling into rapid decay.

The next morning some of us proposed a ride into the Interior to see the Lions of the neighbourhood; and accordingly two or three of us mounted our horses, and taking a guide with us directed our course to a Native village called Sabbigee. The scenery, as we proceeded, increased in interest, being diversified with woodland; and the open country presented extensive proofs of advancing cultivation. The people were busily em-

ployed in preparing the land for sowing corn, which they do by the simple process of burning the bush and grass, which clears the ground, and at the same time supplies it with that sort of manure best adapted to its nature.

I was very much struck with the number of Beehives which we saw in our ride. These were fastened to the boughs of the trees and left there for the honey-making insects to swarm, and had a very singular appearance. The Ant-hills, also, are frequently to be met with of a large size and considerable height, and show the ingenuity of insect labour. There seemed to be plenty of cattle straying about the Bush, as you approached the village of Sabbigee; but with the exception of a few orange-trees, which were of large growth, fruit-trees appeared to be very scarce. There was nothing in the village worth noticing except a very large Mosque of a circular shape, built of wood, and thatched in an oval form, terminating in a point at the top. Everything about it looked very neat, but nothing would induce the priest to allow us to see the interior of it. Our attempts to persuade him to grant us our request were met with scorn and contempt; nor did it avail anything that he was informed I was the "Big Parson," but rather appeared to increase his contempt for us. I was half-disposed to be vexed



with this untutored savage, but prudence suggested forbearance; for any provocation at the distance we were from our party might have led to serious results to ourselves, as a trifling incident served to convince us.

My horse's foot accidentally became entangled in some cotton they were spinning, which provoked such frowns and murmurings, although no injury was done, as convinced us it would require but little irritation to stir them up to some acts of violence. Nor would they be satisfied, notwithstanding we behaved civilly and tried to convince them we did not mean to injure their property. The streets of this village were so narrow that it was with difficulty we could pass our horses through them. Game is occasionally to be seen here, but the natives do not care much about it. The granaries of these people are constructed with great care, and in a very simple but secure manner, being chiefly filled with corn and rice. The Monkey-trees about this part of the coast are remarkable for their size, especially two or three not far from the Cape-house. The circumference of two of them would almost exceed belief; but they are quite useless for any practical purposes.

By the time we regained our friends, whom we found waiting our return, for it was the hour of

dinner, our appetites had been sharpened by our morning's exercise, and we were not sorry therefore to see all in readiness. The liberality of our hosts had supplied us with a variety of dainties, and it was really fortunate that we were in such considerate company; for the staple commodity of the dinner-table, a noble leg of mutton, had disappeared during the night; a disappointment we were little prepared for in so solitary a nook as the Cape. Our Nephew, and the towering Adjutant looked unutterable indignation and annoyance; for they had been, like ourselves, on active service the whole day, and would have preferred the joint to the variety. Nor was this the first time their forbearance had been tried in a similar manner; some delicate stomach in the barracks having, a few days before, taken a fancy for mutton, which in the substantial form of half a sheep was devoted to the officers' Sunday dinner! As I made up part and parcel of the Mess during my sojourn with our Nephew, so I had reason to mix my complaints on that occasion with those of my military friends; for short-commons on Sunday in a place where little is to be obtained, unless you make provision the preceding day, is not a trifling misfortune. I could not conceive, on entering the great gates of the barracks that morning as usual, what was the matter. There was some-

thing wrong I could clearly see; the men wore not their accustomed cheerful looks; the officers betrayed uneasiness and were walking up and down, talking in that hurried and ominous way which showed all was not exactly right. The Commandant was, Napoleon fashion, meditating in front of the soldiers,—not a furious cannonade, but the discovery of the thief, and the most likely means of securing his detection. The recovery of the deserter was resolved upon, and the most strenuous measures put into immediate operation to discover where he had gone. After the service was over, I learnt the true cause of this commotion and also that the ordinary privilege of being permitted to walk out was to be refused, and the gates closed until the epicurean offender should be forthcoming. Many a long and doleful face was to be seen that day; and sad looks and piteous indications of sorrow and disappointment on the countenances of the soldiers, at being prisoners for the roguery of some hungry fellow. My old friend, the serjeant-major, one of my adult pupils at Nassau, who had orders to suffer no one to pass the gates without permission, looked most miserable, and begged me to intercede with the Commandant, which I did and successfully. But his object was only to try by a short and temporary privation to get hold of the

pilferer, not purposing to detain them longer than a short time in quarters. Many a hearty laugh have we enjoyed in reverting subsequently to this incident.

I could have willingly prolonged my visit to the Cape for a day or two, for in addition to the many agreeable inducements to do so, we had the rare pleasure of a little female society, as one of our friends was a lady who resided with our host at St. Mary's, and had accompanied him to pass a few days there for the benefit of her health. But parting was unavoidable, and we were obliged to return. Whilst at the Cape we were honoured with a visit from one of the Mandingo Chiefs, whose dress consisted of a Native cap and a kind of tunic, which were beautifully worked with party-coloured figures, and he wore sandals; he was decorated also with the usual charms and ornaments. Like the rest of his race he was a beggar for everything he saw; not averse to parting with some of his personal nick-nackeries at a good price; and manifesting a strange mixture of disagreeable familiarity with a great deal of self-conceit.

Once more we are mounted and off! Away we speed again across the sandy soil and through the bush, now dashing aside with our whips or sticks the branches that would stop our course, now

floundering as if in mire, through the heavy sands! Steady though swift, and a well-guarded rein! For this is no agreeable pace to be rolled over your horse's head, albeit a soft bed awaits you should your beast stumble! But where are we? Bravo our Nephew! Well done Adjutant! So you would have us pass another day in the Bush, and "without appliances and means to boot!" Excellent—we've lost our way! All in a maze! In and out—here and there—round and round—at last we return again to the pretty cottage; another fair start and we are all right! But the swamp, the horrible swamp! and high-water! Regularly in for it! The Commandant halts! Whereabouts did we cross it? All in perplexity! Well, never mind a short swim! Our Nephew leads! who would not follow? Lucky for once! Just up to the horse's haunches, and no further. The other side is gained, and off we are full gallop to shake off the wet and keep away bad consequences! Our friend Charon is on the look-out to ferry us over a second Styx, with a grin on his face and his hand ready for the pretty coin. Some more oysters, a peep at the Pocket-pistol, ten minutes' rest and rubbing for the horses, and we are at last looking out again, after a thorough good cleansing, from "our Nephew's" piazza, rehearsing and proud of our exploits!



So anxious were our Gambia friends to make the most of us and render my visit to St. Mary's agreeable, that they would not allow us breathing time for rallying our courage for their further proofs of goodwill before some new object of amusement was proposed. An excursion was therefore determined upon to Mr. Ll——'s country house up the river. Two boats were got ready; and a Coos-coos luncheon at his town-house prepared us for our undertaking.

The Coos-coos is a favourite dish not only with the Natives, but in repute with every one who once tastes it; and we were led to understand that we should have it in perfection at Mr. Ll——'s. Besides our boating party there were several others invited to assist us in demolishing this African compound, for such it was, being made up of something of all kinds. But the principal ingredient, and what gives it its name and fame is the Guinea corn of which it is made. This is ground or powdered very fine, well sifted, boiled with great care, and eaten with a variety of substantials which are also prepared for the purpose. Every one at the table seemed to approve of it but myself; but I could not find out what there was in it which made it so palatable.

After doing justice to Mr. Ll——'s hospitality, we took to the boats and rowed away to his coun-

try house. The river, as we proceeded, was uncommonly picturesque, equal to anything we had seen in steaming it to the Falls. The clusters of mangroves, which were of luxuriant growth and here and there spread about the river, were exceedingly beautiful, and with the oysters adhering to them in great numbers, and which were visible at low tide, were something novel to see. They are the same as those I have already mentioned; and when I write of a stick or branch of these shellfish, which you could get when the water is fallen, I mention what is neither incorrect nor unusual. On arriving at our place of destination we found ourselves domiciled in quarters very similar to those we had occupied at the Cape, and in a most secluded spot, being embosomed in trees, and approached from the landing by a short walk through mangroves. There was a small village at a short distance, which we visited at night, and where we found the different families engaged round their fires outside their huts in dressing their food for supper. The black faces had an odd appearance, reflected upon, as they were, by the flames; whilst all around them, and beyond the spot where they were seated, was in total darkness.

We made a very merry party, scheming various plans to amuse ourselves and get an appetite for

the supper, for which every one appears on these occasions to be always ready. Captain Ebenezer was amongst our number, and contributed liberally to the mirth of the evening, which was kept up to an hour later than my eyes would permit me to be spectator of; so I quietly slipped away to my bed, and was soon after followed by our Nephew and the Adjutant, who slept in the same apartment, leaving our "cari sodales" to turn night into morning if they pleased. Our retreat was however soon noticed, and a conspiracy immediately raised to attack us in our strong-hold. Fortunately we discovered it in time to guard against surprise; and when the treachery on the other side of the wainscoting began to work and the rogues were in the act of scaling the partition which divided us, for it did not reach high enough to prevent any one's getting over, we generously notified that any molestation of our bodies or interruption our of slumbers would be returned without mercy. A slight feint being made at escalade, which proved a failure, they gave up the assault and left us to our dreams. The next morning a treaty of peace was entered into, and after partaking of a good breakfast we took again to the boats and returned to St. Mary's. The different glimpses which you catch of the town of Bathurst in passing through the numerous man-

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grove islands and meanderings of the river, are exceedingly pretty. There is little to boast of in the way of shipping: but, taking the view as a whole, it is not wanting in interest.

An evening party, at which Uncle Curiosity was present, concluded the amusements of the day. As this determined bush-ranger had been a defaulter in the last expedition by not accompanying us, it was agreed by all that the least punishment which ought to be dealt out to him was to require from him a specified day and hour when he should apologize to us for such a dereliction of duty, at his own table, over a clean, white tablecloth, properly furnished with plate and glass and becomingly provided. Very wisely choosing to pay the penalty of his neglect without delay, he fixed upon the next day for doing penance; and, accordingly, the next day at five P.M. we assembled at my Uncle's residence.

My Uncle and his house were counterparts of one another, as were his habits and pursuits. It is as difficult as tiresome very often to find out the abode of your friends in these places; but the bush-ranger's quarters could not be mistaken. A large cage full of pickaninny birds twittering away in the piazza their faint monotonous note; two or three leopard's skins hanging out over the railings of these African balconies; a pair of curling horns

peeping through the balustrade, and three or four monkeys, the choicest of their species, told you at once who was the lord of the mansion. Then my Uncle with his ever-cheerful smiling face, his cigar, "wide awake," and smock frock, if perchance he was cogitating in the piazza, was in himself from head to foot, too remarkable a piece of mortality to mistake him for any other person than a naturalist.

Nor was his yard without its amusing peculiarities, which crowded your *entrée* up to the very door which opened into his parlour. Into this repository of animal oddities you entered by a double gate, which was guarded alternately, and sometimes conjointly, by an ill-natured dog and as ill-favoured a Samboite, whose bark and grin were enough to frighten you from any further advances. But my Uncle was on the look-out for us at his piazza, and so we gained admittance without any cause for apprehension, except that once within the portal, we found ourselves, as I have just said, in the midst of all sorts of odd things. The ill-formed, ugly, moping, and stupid-looking Maraboo, with his wonderful tail, and so famed for its beauteous and downy feathers, was there; the strong-jointed, tall, and swift Ostrich, with its disproportioned small wings; the bristly Porcupine, and I forget what beside, not to mention

bones and skulls and hideous heads of monstrous Hippopotami, showing their granivorous teeth and ivory tusks in every direction. Ostrich eggs, and Plants, and the elegant and graceful Crown bird, with his magnificent crest of small fine golden feathers, from which it takes its name. Nothing can surpass, for depth of rich colouring and brilliancy, the large round piercing black eye of this exquisite creature, set as it is in its golden circle, and as if conscious of its beauty, strutting like the peacock amongst his less favoured companions.

My Uncle welcomed us, and by his amusing humour and original remarks recommended by his best manners, for we were favoured on this occasion with the desirable addition of some ladies, to whom my Uncle, bachelor as he was, and generally indifferent to the laws of refinement, never failed in paying the most courteous deference. Our female guests consisted of married ladies: the mother of Mr. Ll——, a venerable and sensible looking woman; Mr. Ll——'s wife, and another fair dame. Two out of the three were coloured, but not the less agreeable or intelligent on that account. The table talk was spirited and entertaining, and sometimes carried on in the Native language, which although unintelligible to me, sounded freely and fluently and appeared adapted at any rate, to

conversational purposes. The ladies rose at an early hour ; and the gentlemen with praiseworthy moderation contented themselves with drinking their health whilst getting ready for leaving, when we all dispersed, having granted a free and full pardon to my Uncle for all past delinquencies.

The time for my taking leave of my kind friends at St. Mary's was now drawing near ; it had passed too pleasantly not to have many regrets, and in occupations which seemed to have accelerated its approaching too quickly. My intended stay at Bathurst moreover had been originally limited to the return of Captain Ebenezer to Free-town ; but unforeseen delays had detained him at St. Mary's, and I naturally felt anxious not to trespass on the kindness of the Governor, who had sanctioned my visit to the Gambia. But no means of obtaining a passage offered except in some small craft, and I was not in the least disposed to risk the dangers of sea and land for the sake of a few days, there being, as I was informed, between St. Mary's and Free-town, some very unceremonious Land as well as Water Monsters. At last the day of saying farewell arrived, and I passed it with our Nephew and the rest of his brother officers. We had known one another for years and had well met ; we were to separate, probably never to exchange welcomes again in this world. We therefore pledged the

glass of friendship ; and as evening stole upon us I sought the vessel of Ebenezer Playwell with a heavy heart, accompanied by the worthy Red-coats, who saw me safely in the boat and gave me three of their best cheers, hats waving in the air, which I returned as well as I could, twisting mine about in every direction ; but it was on my part a failure, for happier days I had not known since I last left Old England. To my berth I therefore crept, as soon as I was on board, and tried to forget myself and everything about me.

## CHAPTER XV.

RETURN TO FREE-TOWN FROM THE GAMBIA.—UNTIMELY DEATH OF THE REV. MR. ILLINGSWORTH, AND OTHER GOVERNMENT OFFICERS, IN 1844; NO TABLET TO THEIR MEMORY.—REMARKS ON THE PUTTING-UP OF TABLETS, AND ERECTING BUSTS AND MONUMENTS IN CHURCH.—BUST OF SIR W. FOWELL BUXTON, BART. IN ST. GEORGE'S. — HINTS ABOUT REGISTERS. — IGNORANCE IN CHURCH MATTERS. — REFUSAL TO ADMIT ILLEGITIMATE CHILDREN INTO THE MISSIONARY SCHOOLS.—PROPOSED SCHOOL FOR SUCH CHILDREN. — REFLECTIONS ON THIS SUBJECT.

I HAD been playing truant so long at the Gambia, that I began to get uneasy lest I might be thought infringing upon that kindness which had permitted me to visit that part of the coast. I might, indeed, have returned in a very small craft, but I had no desire to be devoured by either marine or land cannibals; and of the latter species of carnivorous animal Captain Ebenezer, whether in jest or earnest I cannot say, assured me there was great fear to be entertained in our midway passage between St. Mary and Free-town. Unwilling, therefore, as I was, to leave so many

kind friends whose attentions to me had been so unceasing, and quit a spot already becoming interesting to me in many points of view, ministerially as well as locally, I was nevertheless glad, on the score of my public duties at Sierra Leone, to find myself on my way back again to Free-town. Yet notwithstanding I avoided the dangers referred to, by returning with my old friend, and was proof against sea qualms and the like unaristocratic weaknesses, as needs I ought to be after eleven passages across the Atlantic, I felt strange misgivings and queer sensations, not from the motion of the vessel, but a doubt what might be the result of my re-appearance at Free-town, having so long transgressed, although unavoidably, the period it was supposed I should occupy in going to and returning from Bathurst.

It was therefore with infinite satisfaction that I welcomed the opportunity of paying my respects to the governor of Sierra Leone, who dealt very leniently with me in the matter, and seemed perfectly willing to consider the hazard of falling into the jaws of sharks or cannibals, a most reasonable plea for my protracted absence.

Poor Illingsworth! thy hapless fate reminds us of the dangers of the treacherous winds and waves, and warns us not to be too rash! How often have I, from my window, traced the fragile

boat and light canoe tossed on the tops of the stormy waters, and thought of thee and those who perished with thee !

The death of this unfortunate gentleman and five others, all of them men of the highest respectability and the majority officials in Her Majesty's service, who, with him, found a watery grave, may justly claim a place in these pages. Mr. Illingsworth was my predecessor in the office which I now fill at Sierra Leone, and a universal favourite as a gentleman, clergyman, a kind neighbour, and a friend. Previous to his nomination to the appointment which he held at the time of his death, he was Chaplain on board a Man-of-war, where he was held in the highest esteem by every one, officers and men. Here, probably, he acquired that prevailing partiality for boating which led to the sad catastrophe I am relating.

Poor Illingsworth, with the Brazilian Judge, the Colonial Surveyor, the Colonial Secretary, and two or three more gentlemen were anxious to take leave of some friends on board a ship which was to sail that day, when the accident occurred. Whilst the chaplain was preparing and getting his boat ready, some friends cautioned him against carrying too much sail, and observed that his mast was too high. Disregarding the warning he jumped



into his boat with most of the gentlemen mentioned, in high glee, and off they pushed for the Man-of-war.

The over-ruling ways of Providence are wonderful, and sometimes exemplified in so striking a manner, that it is impossible not to see in them an intention to teach the living a lesson which they are too apt to forget. Three of the party escaped the untimely end which awaited the others, in a very remarkable way. One of them was in the act of leaving his office to join the chaplain, when he was required by the Governor to transact some business which demanded immediate attention; otherwise he would most assuredly have gone with the rest of the party. Another owed his preservation to some affair of a Public nature which would not admit of his being absent at the time of his setting off towards the boat. The third person that escaped was in the act of putting his foot into the craft when one of his clerks came and acquainted him that very urgent business rendered it necessary that he should immediately return!

Little did the chaplain and his friends suppose, when they left the shore in high spirits, full of mirthful yet harmless animation, in the prime of life, and glowing with all the excitement of joy which their visit to the vessel caused, that the

thread of their mortal existence and every connection of an earthly nature, were so soon to be cut and riven ! But such was the will of Him whose ways are inscrutable, yet merciful and just !

After some hours passed with their friends on board and the different officers by whom he was beloved, my poor predecessor with his party bade adieu for ever to the world and everything in it ! I believe some little apprehension for their safety was entertained as they quitted the vessel's side, but such a termination was certainly not looked for. A very intimate friend of the chaplain, Captain T——y, who with his wife was in Free-town at the time, was watching the party from his window, and had retired from it only for a few seconds, when, returning to it, to his alarm he could not see the boat ! Seizing his spy-glass, he hurriedly and wistfully looked with a boding heart over the surface of the water to catch some glimpse, however faint, of the unhappy objects of his search ! Alas, it was unavailing ! At one fell swoop Death had hurried out of this world at least five souls ! Not a vestige of the boat was ever after found ; not a body, neither anything, I believe, belonging to them was cast on shore to confirm what, nevertheless, was too certain to be doubted ! Only two African servants, who ac-

accompanied them, saved their lives by swimming to shore ; and their tale is short but sad enough.

Expert swimmers as the natives are, these poor fellows found it hard work to gain the shore, and the efforts which they made for life were at fearful odds, for the land was at a considerable distance, and the shark is ever on his watch to seize a victim. My ill-fated predecessor, who was also a strong and bold swimmer, struggled desperately, as the survivors said, and for some time kept above water ; but at last, exhausted with the weight of his clothes and boots, his exertions gradually failed him. He made a few fruitless snatches at one of the survivors who was swimming near him ; they were his death-struggles ! Nature had done her utmost, his hour was come : and, raising his eyes to heaven, with hands for a moment extended towards Him who, though invisible, is attentive to his servants' cry, he exclaimed, " O Lord, have mercy !—O Lord, have mercy on my soul !" and disappeared for ever to this world !

The consternation and grief at so calamitous an event exceed the powers of description. Those who perished were men of the highest respectability, officers of talent, and some of them left wives to deplore their loss. The pulpits on this occasion were occupied by Preachers who



did justice to the memory of those who had died, and endeavoured to improve the awful catastrophe in a way suitable to the occasion. But for Mr. Illingsworth, in particular, regret and sorrow united in testifying how severely every one felt his loss; and he still lives in the memories of those who always listened to him with delight! No tablet, strange to say, has yet been put up in Saint George's Church to record their worth and memorialize their fate!—There is, however, a neatly executed bust of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton, but it is placed so near the ground, and enclosed with such a wretched apology for a railing, as to be almost out of sight, unless you get close to it. There are a few other tablets in the Church, but they are common-place in style and sentiment. That to the memory of Governor Fergusson is about as good as any of them. Not content, however, with this, Adulation would have been so extravagant in its posthumous praise as to have honoured him with another in the same Church, had the Acting Governor sanctioned it. The origin of two tablets having been subscribed to for him was, I believe, a party spirit, which, as is generally the case, leads to those feelings so hostile to unanimity in every undertaking.

It may not be improper to mention here, for it

will probably assist to remove any ideas which may hereafter be entertained of unwillingness on the part of clergymen to meet the wishes of their parishioners and others, in respect to the placing tablets and erecting monuments or busts in the Churches; that it is not a mere act of courtesy to the minister first to ask him his permission to do so. The Church to which he is appointed is his Freehold; and no one can, independently of his sanction, enter the Church and put up a tablet or erect a monument or bust without violating that right which belongs to him.

If, indeed, as it is well known to those familiar with the law upon that point, any tablet or other monumental memorial be once put up, it is not in the minister's power to remove it. Whosoever reflects upon this subject will see at once the propriety and importance of the right of opinion and choice in a matter of this kind being vested in the minister, for many reasons and one in particular,—that but for this reservation in favour of the Clergyman, there would be a licence and opportunity for indulging the most absurd, and probably the most profane and scandalous abuses, at the sacrifice of truth, piety, and worth. One has only to go to a churchyard, and read the trash which is inscribed or engraven on the tombstones, to form a fair expectation of what the walls of a

Church would exhibit, if it were left to laymen, whoever they might be, to do as they pleased in this case. Trifling as observations of this kind may seem to superficial minds and thoughtless or unreflecting persons, yet a fine classic taste and sobered judgment are not called for in any thing more necessarily than in this, unless the House of God is to be made the receptacle of fulsome adulation and unmerited praise, if not of something worse.

As I have again reverted to Church affairs, I beg to be allowed to observe, that the Parish Registers, which ought always to be under the care and superintendence of the minister and no one else, should not be unprovided, as they are at present, with an Iron Box, to preserve them from injury and defacement.

People's notions upon these points are so very vague and erroneous in Sierra Leone, that it may not be unseasonable to say something upon the subject. For whether understood at all, or only imperfectly, and therefore unsatisfactorily, but one view, and that a mistaken one, I suspect, is conceived about this matter. That ignorance about such things is chargeable upon many in Free-town may be taken for granted, when I state that a person of no inconsiderable influence and standing in the Colony, and one to whom most persons look,

as a kind of oracle, did not understand the nature and duty of the Church Rite of The Thanksgiving of Women after Childbirth! And it is necessary, perhaps, to live in Sierra Leone to experience and to understand to what extent that ignorance is combined with an unwillingness to be set right, and a stubbornness not to be corrected.

But it is not alone with regard to tablets and busts, and comparatively less important things that this ignorance is to be deplored and traced to individuals otherwise well informed. Dangerous as it may be in relation to these things if not explained away and thus deprived of an excuse for even unintentionally affording ground for scandal and reproach to Religion, it becomes culpable in the highest degree and insufferable, when it dares to assume the character of that intolerant exclusiveness which presumes to shut out those from the rights and privileges of that common Christianity, whose ruling principle and heavenly spirit are, that all should be brought by all means to a saving knowledge of its Faith. And yet by what authority, Human or Divine, by what rule of Mercy, Love, or Charity, which we are taught to believe, and which we know inculcates that as we freely receive so are we bound freely to give, men, because they are charged with

clerical responsibilities and consecrated to Holy Offices, take upon themselves to refuse Illegitimate Girls admittance to their schools, it is difficult to understand. This, nevertheless, is the case; and a greater hardship, or more impolitic and unchristian measure cannot be well imagined. Diametrically opposite to the will and declarations of the Divine Founder of our Faith is this distinction, and can only take its rise from that bigotry of self-righteousness which would forbid, as of old, a desire to be brought to and be taught of him. It is, verily, carrying out to some purpose by human agency the awful denunciation of the Commandment, which threatens to visit on the children the sins of the parents, when these young creatures, blameable for nothing but the fault of those who gave them birth, are denied the only means which are intended and calculated to preserve them from committing in after-life the same errors. If this system was to be carried into practice, I question if a very considerable portion of the population would not fall under the interdict.

If by thus refusing to admit into the schools these young people, whose only disqualification is allowed to be, the unhappy circumstance of their being born out of wedlock, for which misfortune they are not accountable, they who do so think they are upholding virtue and providing



an effective check to immorality — they are very much mistaken. The very opposite consequence will be the result, unless to reproach and stigmatize individuals for what is to them a misfortune and not a vice or crime is the proper way to show them the superiority of virtue over vice, of religion over irreligion, of morality over licentiousness. It is, in fact, monstrous, that those young persons who are not only willing to be taught, but whose parents are ready to pay for their instruction, should be refused the means of religious and general instruction. Will they be the better, or more likely to avoid the sins of their parents by being forced to remain in ignorance, and, as it were discarded with a mark set upon them? It is to the rising and succeeding generation that society in Sierra Leone must look for any great and permanent change in manners and morals; and this change can only be brought about by that instrumentality which is at present denied them. From whatever quarter this restriction and invidious distinction derives a sanction, the sooner it is withdrawn the better. So far from serving to diminish immorality, it is to be feared it will by aggravation tend to provoke it to more violent excesses.

Many of these unfortunate young persons who are thus shut out from the only means of preserving them from falling into a course of life similar

to that which is made the objection of their admittance into the missionary schools, are very respectable, well-conducted, and anxious to receive a religious and useful education. And as to their parents who have unhappily transgressed the moral law, such a method of denouncing vice by visiting the offence upon their offspring is not calculated to dispose them favourably to listen to the exhortations, or respect the ministry of men who seem to shut against them and their offspring the gate of reformation instead of opening it to its full width for their reception. It is as much as to say, "You are so bad, so reprobate, that we will not give you a chance of becoming better. Send your children where you can and where you like; but to us they cannot come, for we should thereby be polluted!" Are young girls placed in the same unfortunate position in England marked out by so public an opprobrium, and considered ineligible for a participation in those privileges, I ought to say those rights, which they can claim in common with others? Do our Private or Public Seminaries, our Charity, or any other establishments of a similar nature discard such applicants as unfit for any other society than that of a Penitentiary? But I must further observe on this subject, that many of the parents themselves of these children, although censurable for a serious offence against the laws

of man and God, do, nevertheless, in all other respects, except that of adopting the marriage ceremony, live as blamelessly and faithfully together as those who have been joined together in wedlock in the Church by the hands of a minister. I do not urge this fact as any excuse, extenuation, or sanction for the contempt of those rules of human conduct and indifference to that sacred character which the Church has wisely thought fit to give to the Marriage Ceremony. Every seriously thinking person will admit, that the Titles of Man and Wife, to be accredited by a Christian community, require some more legal and specific declaration than that which the most unobjectionable fidelity can otherwise confer. The weakness, and infirmities, and corruption of our nature must be guarded against by some recognized form and ceremonial; and the standard which society has so long and prudently fixed upon is that, which disregarded, must entail, it is true, and deservedly, a merited obloquy upon those who set it at nought. At the same time I would by these remarks desire to be understood as wishing to point out the impolicy as well as cruelty of such restrictive measures, and their entire repugnance to the spirit and even letter of the Divine Law.

To obviate the disadvantages which so many young persons must experience from this exclu-

sive system, a plan has been contemplated by Captain Terry and his Wife, within the last three years, to raise a fund for the support of an Establishment to be devoted to this particular purpose. With this view they have proposed dedicating the profits of some admirable Sketches of Sierra Leone, by Mrs. Terry towards this most laudable object; and a lady in every respect highly qualified for so delicate and responsible a duty was sent out for the purpose, but subsequent circumstances have deprived the Cause of her valuable services. It is to be hoped, nevertheless, that it will not be suffered to decline through want of support and supporters, for I know not any undertaking which is so likely to be of more real and permanent benefit to the community of Sierra Leone than a well organized and religiously conducted school for the reception of young females, whose painful lot it is to be otherwise denied the benefits of a Christian Education on account of the offences of their parents.

To all those who do not for fashion-sake or from worldly motives pretend only a desire for the moral and religious improvement of Africa, but in heart and good-will wish it, the Education of the Illegitimate Girls in the Colony is a subject of the greatest moment and importance to the future, perhaps, even more than the present welfare of

Free-town. For from the present generation who are now moving upon the stage of life there little may be expected beyond a few solitary exceptions in the way of moral and religious reformation. With them I much fear if ever a general and abiding change will be effected. But in the young and rising population, particularly that portion of it to which these remarks have been pointed, we may either hope to see the germs of virtue and piety, if timely sown and kindly tended, producing a different and more exemplary community ; or have reason to fear we shall witness the seeds of evil-example, allowed by an inexcusable neglect to generate in hearts capable of better things, producing a race of beings worse than their predecessors.

## CHAPTER XVI.

FURTHER ACCOUNT OF THE AKOOS. — REMARKABLE HISTORY OF AN AKOO SLAVE, HIS ADVANCEMENT, SEPARATION FROM HIS MOTHER AND SISTERS ; RESTORATION TO THEM AFTER TWENTY-FIVE YEARS' ABSENCE, AND HIS INSTRUMENTALITY IN THEIR CONVERSION AND BAPTISM. — VILLAGE OF LEICESTER. — ITS BOTANICAL GARDEN AND FINE ORANGES. — ITS MISSIONARY CHURCH. — ITS MOUNTAIN AND PINERIES. — DESTRUCTION BAY. — ORIGIN OF ITS NAME. — SOME CURIOUS INCIDENTS CONNECTED WITH THE BREAKING UP OF THE VESSELS. — HOMEWARD AND OUTWARD BOUND. — PASSAGES AND REMARKS ON THEM. — AMUSING AND FORTUNATE TERMINATION OF ONE. — EVENING DEVOTIONS OF MAHOMEDANS. — REFLECTIONS. — PROBABLE INFLUENCE OF THE INTRODUCTION OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM INTO SIERRA LEONE ON MAHOMEDANS. — HINTS AT MINISTERIAL CONDUCT IN REFERENCE TO THIS SUBJECT.

In the course of this work I have already alluded to some of the Native Tribes. I would further observe with respect to the Akoos in particular, that they are by far the most numerous of all. They are exceedingly penurious, denying themselves almost the necessaries of existence to indulge their selfishness, which with them is an overpowering passion to which they make every other feeling for the most part an

inferior consideration. But, at the same time, they surpass the generality of the rest of their species in their habits of industry, devoting themselves with untiring perseverance and assiduous labour to every kind of business which promises an increase of wealth, no matter what the occupation may be. Nor are they perhaps over-scrupulous in the ways and means of aggrandizing property, transacting their affairs, and trafficking with a degree of Jewish thriftiness and cunning which are never at a loss to qualify and reconcile questionable honesty with peculiar facility. Some of these people are possessors of large sums and extensive property. They are intelligent and not unprepossessing in countenance ; are tolerably well-behaved and attentive to religious duties, and belong to the Yanaba tribe.

The individual history of one who is descended from this people is too interesting and remarkable to withhold from my reader. Many years ago an unfortunate victim of the slave-trade was brought a redeemed captive in a slave vessel which had been seized off the coast, into the colony. He was located, as many others are, at the village of Bathurst, where he first acquired the rudiments of that knowledge, and was grounded in those Christian principles, which subsequently, as the sequel of the story will show, were the foundation



of his present elevation in society. His attention to his studies, steady behaviour and exemplary conduct soon placed him in the situation of a Monitor in the school; and this led to a still further and more pleasing testimony to his merits, in his further appointments to Schoolmaster and then Assistant to the Institution. His enterprising spirit and wish to be useful in his vocation stimulated him to join the unfortunate and ill-planned Niger expedition; and he deservedly received Ordination at the hands of the Bishop of London. On returning to the colony he proceeded with his wife and family to the scene of his new mission, Abeookoota, but little supposing what the mercy of Providence had prepared for him. Human ties of the most sacred and tender nature, affections of the most hallowed kind are rent and violated by the barbarian violence of the slave-dealer; and the poor boy, Samuel Crowther, was not only deprived of liberty when torn from his home and country, but separated in all human probability, from his mother and sisters for ever in this world. Twenty-five years had passed over his head since the day of his captivity, and many wonderful changes in his life and fortunes had attended him in his career. From the ignorant, little, miserable slave he had risen to the responsible and dignified office of a minister of the Most High! This was



of itself a progress from a state of poverty and oppression to comfort and independence, sufficiently striking to give a marked character to Samuel Crowther's case. Yet this is not all that is remarkable in it. It was decreed by Almighty Goodness that this good man and meritorious minister should yet taste the cup of a purer bliss, and partake the joy of a deeper happiness than hitherto had fallen to his share. It was not alone once more before death that he should press to his arms and receive the benediction of his long-lost and bereaved mother; it was not simply that brother and sisters were to greet each other again after so long a period of separation—it was reserved for the son to preach to his Parent and relatives the truths of the Everlasting Gospel, to be instrumental through the Divine help in their conversion from heathenism to the true Faith, and at last to baptize and receive them at the Communion. Mr. Crowther was the *first native* who received Episcopal ordination, and his ministry proves his fitness for the sacred office. He has now a son educating for the profession, who promises fairly to become a useful and zealous minister, and to follow in his father's steps. How unsearchable yet how full of mercy the ways of Him who ordereth man's goings!

As I am again speaking of Missionary subjects,

before taking leave of this part of my work, I would not pass over another interesting little spot connected with Missionary labours, and it is Leicester. This is a very unpretending yet pretty village, and possesses many local attractions. Here there was formerly a Botanical garden, which was supplied by scientific plants, from Kew, in the reign of George the Third. Bread-fruit trees and the orange were also supplied from the last place; the former of these I believe failed, but the latter succeeded exceedingly well, and now yield the most delicious and finest flavoured fruit of the kind in the colony. There was a neat little Church and a native catechist attached to the village, which is not more than about three miles distant from Regent. The Missionary institution was removed from the latter to the former district, but has since been transferred to Fonrah Bay.

The scenery in the vicinity of Leicester is mountainous, diversified with broad distinctions of hill and valley, and altogether a picturesque landscape. From the base to the top of its noble mountain your way is through rich and extensive pine plantations, which have a singular appearance, rather ornamental than otherwise, but curiously contrasting with the other natural productions around them. The pines from this village, like

the oranges, are considered superior to anything else of the sort in size and flavour.

In close proximity with Fonrah Bay is a recess of the sea, called Destruction Bay. It is so named as being the place chosen for the breaking up of the Slave-vessels after their capture and adjudication. When thus legally and finally condemned they are taken to that part of the coast and formally knocked to pieces. I have been informed and upon most creditable authority that many curious discoveries have been made by persons engaged in demolishing these vessels, and in a manner equally surprising as well as profitable to those who have been instrumental in them. Doubloons are said to have been obtained in large amounts by individuals from fragments of the vessel, where they have been concealed for safety; and I believe it is perfectly true that on one occasion, a man who had purchased at auction some hams, which had been taken, amongst other goods, from a Slaver, to his astonishment and no less delight found several Doubloons hid in one of them.

When the tide is at its height this Bay, with the evergreens and creepers thickly overhanging the brow of the eminence from which you look down upon it at a considerable depth below, forms a pleasing and bold variety to the surround-

ing locality. But, at the ebb of the sea, its appearance is desolate enough, for you see not anything on the sands or beach except here and there piles of ribs, planks, and timbers of Slavers, blackened by the sun and water; or, perhaps, some half broken-up vessel waiting the returning tide to finish the work of demolition already in a great measure accomplished. Yet have I often stood upon that lone spot and derived relief from the wretched monotony of everything around me, by watching the Black urchins paddling in the shallow water, over whose heads, midway between them and myself, the sea-gull was winging its dizzy and rapid flight. Or, perhaps, a canoe would suddenly appear afar off like a black speck on the ocean, now tossed aloft on the top of the billows, now lost in the abyss between them; or what was still more familiar, and calculated to awaken reflection, a vessel "homeward bound" to merry, happy England!

What a difference is there in those two words,—"homeward" and "outward bound!" How well do I remember "homeward bound," and what delightful inspiring associations are connected with the revival of those periods of our life, when we could feel as well as think of this sailor's phrase, that it was not only an idea, or wish, or hope, about to be fulfilled, but a reality!

What can equal those sensations of happiness which arise in the human breast as you are borne along over the deep, day after day, like the school-boy, anticipating his deliverance from scholastic confinement, and counting the time, when once more you shall see the first, faint, yet never to be mistaken outlines of Albion's shores, and again partake the sweets of Home, sweet Home !

Passages, and particularly those which you have the misery to make to and from the Western coast of Africa, are anything but agreeable. The merchant vessels, in general, are ill-adapted to carry passengers, and much better suited to convey dead than live stock to Sierra Leone. The class of men, for the most part, are not of that stamp and good breeding to make very eligible heads at the dinner-table, although they may deserve the title of good seamen ; and the inferior officers participate in those peculiarities of manners which are perfectly natural, but not at all acceptable. So that to be shut up for six or seven weeks in a cabin where you cannot hold your head up as a gentleman ought to do, with these annoyances alone, is enough to give any one the horrors. But, further, you frequently encounter torments worse than those already stated, in the characters and dispositions of Passengers as different and contradictory as they are often ill-formed and

churlish, who not only make themselves disagreeable either from perversity of temper or through ignorance of what is and ought not to be said and done in society, but in other ways. The charge for passengers is high and ought to secure them the best of everything in a reasonable way. But I have hardly known an instance where provisions, and particularly liquors, have been equivalent in quality, or even supply, to the rate of passage money. The old saying, "Tricks upon Travellers," is too often carried out into practice on these trips across the Atlantic, for it is found a profitable axiom with ship-owners and their captains; and these good people are fully aware that it is of little use to grumble when people are a thousand miles from land, although it is very mortifying to flesh and blood to be compelled to dine off a white-brown table-cloth, and feed upon *suspicious* fowl pies, and bad wines, besides having to put up with eggs and water for milk, and British Brandy for the pure "aqua vitæ."

The most pleasant passage I have ever made, except my last, when I came home last year from the coast in a Man-of-war, was in company with two other persons, on a former occasion, in ill health. One was a Methodist parson, and the other belonged to the R.N. Both were very agreeable and we managed to get on remarkably well, except

when we discussed such topics as Schism and Church Principles, and then a polemical war would rage fiercely, but only for a short time, when everything would go on as smoothly as ever.

My worthy friend, the Wesleyan, was really a clever, well-intentioned young aspirant for clerical fame, and as good a specimen of his particular calling as you would in general meet with, except my "Little Friend." He was thoroughly good-tempered, and not easily irritated; but now and then, to the great amusement of the Blue-jacket, and the production of a hearty laugh from all of us, would argue most impassionately on the merits of Methodism, and get savage when told he was not a Churchman. Topics of this nature are always best avoided in general society, and controversial subjects in theology are better adapted to the lecture-room than the cabin. But somehow, with all our care and good understanding a little war of opinion broke out on discussing these matters, which for a short time marred the otherwise unbroken unanimity which reigned amongst us. Time, and tide, and wind, however, at last brought us into the Channel, and a pilot from the Isle of Wight, to our unspeakable satisfaction, was soon alongside of us. "Where from?" and "All 's well" were quickly followed by "Any one for Cowes?"

and the Wesleyan and the Churchman were not long in transferring themselves from the vessel to the boat, and unceremoniously leaving our companion in travel to make the best of his way with his men to London.

It was with hearts as light as the happiness of once more getting safely back again to Old England could make any two poor creatures delivered from an earthly purgatory, that we watched the harbour to which our boat was bearing us swiftly over the waters; and never could music sound more gratefully on the ear than did the noise of the anchor as it dropped into the deep, and made us fixtures until we were duly qualified by "Permit" to land. Creeping close to the bit of a fire in the cabin, and warming ourselves, we soon forgot all polemical squabbles, and shaking hands with each other, congratulated ourselves on the pleasing prospect of being comfortably seated by a blazing fire in half an hour running over the waiter's list of good things, or hearing him enumerate the statistics of the larder, when down came the pilot below, with a face portraying some deplorable mishap. A preliminary discussion of no very gentle character on deck, just before the hardy seaman made his appearance, had rather alarmed my Wesleyan friend, who, being a novice in these matters, and having an uncontrollable dread of the delay and other



miseries attending upon a benefit of quarantine, listened with the most visible tokens of fear at the conversation going on between the pilot and officer who had come to authorize our release from the hole in which we were incarcerated. But his horror was indescribable, on hearing our doom pronounced by the pilot, who, with a significant shake of the head, expressed his apprehensions that we had made a bad job of it, and should have to do penance in quarantine, under very aggravated privations. I had already experienced the pleasures of this kind of imprisonment, and knew enough of it to fear the consequences of our not being permitted to land, yet thought it best to conceal my own uneasiness to spare my friend's nerves, which were evidently on the rack with the tortures of suspense. Determined to procure some sort of refreshment to support us under our trying circumstances, I sent for a supply of bread and cheese and porter, and meanwhile did my best to solace my companion, whose firmness was not equal to the occasion which called for such a painful exercise of patience and fortitude. At last some one was heard summoning the pilot on deck; and as he ascended, the eatables and drinkables descended, hope and hunger exercising an equal share of influence on mind and body. In a few moments we heard the voices of men again dis-

putting about the propriety of our having been brought away from the ship and intimations of no agreeable a nature that into quarantine we must go. But at length the rhetoric of the pilot, and his persuasive arguments, overcame all further difficulties. We heard him pleading most eloquently and earnestly for our freedom, urging arguments which were not to be withstood. He pointed out to the officer the characters of his passengers, describing them as two worthy-looking and reverend gentlemen, one of whom he was convinced could be none other than a great personage, for he had a doctor's hat upon his head, and pressing upon him accordingly the prudence of not detaining us. "Consider," said the pilot, "a doctor's hat!" The appeal was irresistible, and pilot, and officers, and passengers were soon on the best terms. The fierceness with which we devoured the bread and cheese, and the long draughts of the porter which we took, convinced the officers of our sound and healthful state. After putting a few questions to us about the salubrity of the climate of Sierra Leone, and the weather we had on our passage, they proposed an adjournment to the hotel close by, which we readily concurred in adopting. The countenance of my friend brightened upon hearing this charitable proposition made. "To the hotel," he cried, and was

not slow in bolting out through the hatchway, for he had been sitting on thorns the whole time of examination, for fear we should be asked the posing question if any had died on board during our passage, which was the case; for one of the man-of-war's men had paid the debt to Nature and intemperance. "Ah, doctor," said the Wesleyan, laying his hand on my shoulder, "never, never go without that hat,—that invaluable hat; it has saved us from a dreadful torture; we owe our present felicity, and this cheerful fireside, and this smoking glass of grog to your hat; if no other good comes of his Grace's compliment to you than this, that it has by the magic of your incomparable hat, preserved us from the pains and penalties of quarantine, it is sufficient to make you ever set a priceless value upon a doctor's hat!" This is not a fictitious, but a real story, and it has afforded me and my friends many a hearty laugh when we reverted to the happy hour in which it originated. And I almost always think of it when I hear or read of "Homeward-bound."

But the vessel is no longer seen which recalled this circumstance to my recollection! she has disappeared! And hark! sounds of voices come tunefully and solemnly from those huts which line the sides of the road! they are the chants of the

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believers of the false prophet reciting portions of the Koran, which is the Mahommedan's evening occupation and duty as the sun disappears in the western wave. Sincere but misguided beings! may the light of a holier and purer faith dispel the heathen darkness which now involves you in the delusive errors of a false creed, and attune your voices to the recital of His words, which are truth and life to the soul! There is something impressive, however, and even solemn, in these repetitions as you hear them in the quiet evening, when all around is still, and you are otherwise left to the undisturbed enjoyment of your own thoughts; and the fervency with which these bigoted adherents to Mahommedan principles give oral proof of their knowledge of them, moves you to pity that sincerity which is often found to be perhaps stronger in the advocates of a mistaken, than in the professors of a right belief. I have never heard, nor do I think that the Mahommedans, although numerous in the colony, are given to proselytism. They appear to be, in this feature of their religious character, altogether different from those of the Roman Catholic persuasion, and to regard it as sufficient if they remain true to the performance of what is required of them by their victorious teacher and founder. But I am disposed to think, from their partiality for ceremonials, and

love of pomp, that they would, in conversion, become proselytes to the Church of Rome more readily than to that of England. The attractive and alluring pageantry, and splendid ritual of the former, so well fitted to lead captive the passions and senses, would, of themselves, act almost irresistibly on the mind of the dark Mahomedan; and the indulgencies which she so freely bestows, together with her other seductive and subtle charms, would not work ineffectually on those unbelievers. Happily the endeavours of the Romish Papacy have, notwithstanding several attempts to obtain a permanent footing for its spiritual power in Sierra Leone, proved hitherto unavailing; and without any other feeling than that which ought ever to actuate the breast of every true Christian, I can only hope that Protestantism and the Bible may, through the Divine blessing, triumph over every artifice, and defeat every device, to disseminate in Sierra Leone, or any other British Colony, the seeds of that insatiate and ambitious power, which, not content with its own spiritual jurisdiction, and secular immunities, would trample upon the rights of Sovereigns, the most ancient claims, regardless of truth's good faith, and raise its presumptuous head over that very Throne which has generously and graciously, but too confidingly, conferred upon

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it every reasonable and equitable, Political, Civil, and Ecclesiastical privilege.

It is not, however, in violent opposition, or displays of petty and insignificant distinctions, which savour more of intolerance and bigotry than a sincere and laudable desire to bring persons, in error, to a right knowledge of what is true, that Popish doctrines are to be successfully combated, and their evil consequences averted, either in guarding against any avowed or suspected desire to introduce them, or refuting them when, unhappily, they have once been received into a Christian community. And I offer this remark with the best intention, yet not without a conviction that the caution has been called for by well-purposed but, at the same time, injudicious, if not illegal distinctions in the exercise of sacerdotal functions between Protestant and Roman Catholic. A just and holy cause stands not in need of such invidious marks of difference, as I am here alluding to, for its approval and prosperity. Besides, I much question the authority, in a legal point of view, which would vindicate the refusal to perform any of the services of our Church when demanded from its ministers for members of that whose fault is not the rejection of the truths of revelation, but the perversion of them, and which, although wrong

in claiming Infallibility, has an equal right with ourselves to the title of an Apostolic church. Let the ministers of the Church of England in Sierra Leone content themselves with a quiet unobtrusive discharge of their spiritual duties, sowing the good seed unostentatiously, but carefully and diligently, instead of attempting to tear up violently the tares, which they cannot do without also rooting up much of the corn with them. Missionary influence, duly regulated, and prudently exercised, in a conciliatory yet firm manner, will do more in disseminating sound religious and constitutional principles, and preserving incorrupt and inviolate the faith of the Gospel in belief and practice, than obnoxious and questionable exercises of priestly duty, too often so called erroneously. And never should objections be made to administer any of the rites of our Church to those whose errors in doctrine and practice we wisely and correctly condemn, but which form no grounds for refusing to them, as individuals of a Church apostolical and once pure, the benefits of her services. By what law, human or Divine, are we taught and commanded to refuse Baptism to a member of the Roman Catholic persuasion? Let us do justice to others as well as ourselves.

## CHAPTER XVII.

CHARACTER OF WILLIAM COOPER THOMPSON, THE LINGUIST;  
HIS LABOURS AND SUFFERINGS.—VISIT TO YORK AND KENT.  
—PENSIONERS' PAY-DAY; SHORT DESCRIPTION OF YORK.—  
AMUSING SCENE AMONGST THE SOLDIER-PENSIONERS.—KENT;  
THE OLD BUILDINGS.—VIEW FROM THE MANAGER'S HOUSE;  
THE MANAGER AND HIS OCCUPATIONS.—THE BANANA ISLANDS.  
—BULLOM SHORE.—FRESH AND THIRD ATTACK OF FEVER.—  
DEPARTURE FROM THE COLONY.—RETURN TO SIERRA LEONE.

Not the least interesting character of those who have lived and died on the Western Coast of Africa, is one whom I would introduce to my readers before these volumes are finished. There is a satisfaction in recording worth, and bearing testimony to merit, especially when they have not been valued and respected as they deserved. Praise, when posthumous, is indeed a poor recompense for those sufferings which a sensitive and cultivated mind has endured from a sense of neglect, perhaps of worse, yet it is due to the living who survive to mourn over the virtues of the dead.



William Cooper Thompson, the subject of this little memoir, was Linguist to the Church Missionary Society. In 1840, he voluntarily joined the Church Missionary enterprise to Port Loco, a Missionary station. He gave himself up to the most diligent study of the Timmanah language, in which he made a progress surprising to every one acquainted with him, and thus laid the solid groundwork of that knowledge in this Native tongue which enabled him afterwards to translate portions of the Scriptures into the same vernacular, and also some Hymns, which are now sung by the Timmanees in the Church at that station. The Parent Committee knew how to estimate such talent and services, and would have continued him in the Mission, but his death took place at an early period of his career, and thus left a blank which was not soon or easily supplied. He accompanied the Government expedition to the interior to 'Tomboo, a Native town on the route to Timbuctoo, which was sent to the Chiefs of the former place to induce them to allow the "Gold Strangers" (persons who trafficked in gold) to come to Sierra Leone for the purposes of trade. He fell a victim to climate, and the consequences of anxiety, exertion, and the many hardships to which he had been exposed in his travels. His servants were stopped

whilst he was up the country, as they were returning with provisions, and he was obliged to subsist on the most precarious and unwholesome food for some time. One of his children, a boy of about twelve years, was with him in the enterprise for nearly two years; and after his death, planted two trees at the head and foot of his grave, at Timboo, where he rests in peace.—He lost his wife, to whom he was fondly attached, only a month before his own demise.

He was born and educated in Scotland, as I am informed; and independent of his general knowledge and talent as a Linguist, possessed other literary qualifications, and was imbued with an exceedingly refined and good taste. He had a vein for poetry; and some of his compositions were not without pathos and point. Yet it was not until he went up to Timboo, that Mr. Thompson was understood or estimated as he ought to have been. And there is reason to fear that his keen susceptibility was not equal to the violence of that shock which he felt in the cold reception he met with from persons who were too ignorant to comprehend how a cheerful disposition was compatible with piety, or too intolerant to allow a happy temper to be in accordance with religion. But as he is no more, let us—

“ No further seek his merits to disclose,  
Or draw his frailties from their dread abode ;  
There they alike in trembling hope repose,  
The bosom of his Father and his God.”

To pass, however, to other subjects. Some allusions have been already made in these pages to York and Kent, district towns of Sierra Leone. I would revisit them with my reader for a few moments to take a peep at the hut where I assisted to pay the old Pensioner Soldiers, in company with my friend—the Commissariat—by counting their coppers for them, and thus getting an appetite for a pair of roast fowls, some Queen’s own, and brown stout, which did not prove the less acceptable for being laid out on a clothless table. The paying these worn-out Red-coats was to me a matter of novelty and amusement, and it is an affair which puts the whole place in commotion. The women seem to have as much to do in the business as the men, and evince their full share of that cupidity which is so characteristic of their love for the “copper.” York has little in it, as a town or village, to call for any particular remarks. Its locality is bold, and the country about it, so far as I was able to observe during my passing visit to it, very mountainous and woody. There is a noble and extensive view of the sur-

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rounding scenery from the high-ground on which stands the Manager's House, a delightful residence to those who love retirement, wild thickets, and plenty of fresh air; and the islets scattered about the sea at this part of the coast, are pretty objects which help to fill up the natural picture. These little islands, although chiefly formed of rock, afford nourishment to bush, and what in England we should call copsewood, which grow thickly and flourish on them. I was particularly struck with the dark and lofty hills, covered as they were with fine trees, as seen from the Manager's house, and beautifully contrasting with the cultivated plain beneath. The Leopards, which are numerous in this district, are very troublesome, and frequently carry away sheep and goats even from the yards attached to the houses.

Both Church and Wesleyan Missionaries are usefully employed in this district, either as Ministers or Catechists; and much good has been effected by their instructions and labours, particularly those of the last Catechist who was there. And these endeavours to promote the best interests of Africa's people, by civilizing and christianizing them, are materially helped forward and strengthened by the examples and co-operation of Captain Terry and his amiable Wife, who are ever ready to lend a hand to the good work.

As we neared the landing-place, the influence of Pay-day on the little community of York was what it is every where. Our arrival was anticipated, and bows and smiles welcomed us before we were fairly out of the water, through which we had to be carried on the men's backs. The place of business chosen for our reception was a hut, or house, perhaps, as the Natives in their notions would call it, close to the beach where we disembarked. The Tin-box, as usual, together with the still more acceptable accompaniment of the Money-bags, were with all due solemnity put upon the table, and proceedings commenced without delay. It was an odd yet not uninteresting scene to witness. When once in the hut there was no getting out of it, so completely were we beset right and left with the pensioners. I earned for myself high encomiums from my friend the Commissariat, for remembering my arithmetic so well, and counting out the due proportion of coppers for each applicant, who came at the call of his name which was cried out by the "Factotum" appointed to that office, and who was an old veteran in the service. It was amusing to notice the eagerness with which the women pounced upon the disbanded warriors, as they backed away from the entrance, cash in hand; and the palavers for settlements of old ar-

rears and sundry claims, which were going on whilst the coin was in circulation. At last the applicants for coppers began, one by one, to diminish in numbers, to the unspeakable satisfaction of the Commissariat, and not less so of myself; and we were happily left to the uninterrupted enjoyment of our fowls, bacon, and Barclay's wholesome double stout. Having amply satisfied our wants with the good things of the table, we prepared for our departure, and retraced our steps to the boat, into which we were handed in the same manner as we were taken out of it. A favourable wind springing up at the time, we made a quick sail of it to Kent, where we were heartily welcomed by the Manager to his comfortable house, and entertained with the best of every thing which his kind attention and hospitality could supply.

The house of our host stood on an elevation, a short distance from the sea and at the extreme point of the land. It commands a full view of the Banana Islands, which are not more, I should conceive, than a good hour's row from Kent. The Church, one of the neatest specimens of sacred architecture in the Colony, stands on the same site of ground, a few yards from the dwelling of our host. Here, as in other districts of the Colony, are to be seen the ruins of edifices built for

Government purposes, which the thoughtless and lavish expenditure of the times caused to be erected at a sinful expense. The village and country of Kent is exceedingly interesting and considered to be, next to the Bananas, more healthy than any other part of the coast.

Our host, who was indefatigable in his endeavours to make us comfortable, is a native of the place, and a man of great intelligence, well-educated, and an active Government officer. He is not only manager of the Kent district, but Captain in the Militia, and a most inveterate enemy to those who traffic in human flesh and blood, for whom, when not otherwise engaged, he is always on the look-out. John Palmer, of Kent, is, in fact, an extraordinary production of his kind, and a most amusing companion. He plays the guitar with vocal accompaniment, writes verses, and has composed a very clever ode in praise of Royalty, which he read to us in excellent style. He is fond of literary pursuits, and has a very decent library of history and divinity. John, who, as I have just observed, is continually on the watch for slave-boats, has been successful in capturing two or three of them; and it is to be hoped he will not lose his reward, for he made his seizures in capital spirit.

On one occasion of his pushing off from shore to attack a suspicious-looking craft, the active manager had armed himself with a pistol, but it was not charged. On approaching the object of his pursuit, he perceived her to be a very large canoe, filled with people; and symptoms of resistance showed themselves in the attitude of defiance which the owners of the craft assumed. But John did not disgrace his profession. Boldly making up to them, he presented his unloaded pistol to the head of one of the party, and in the Queen's name, threatened instant death, if an immediate surrender of the canoe was not made. The deception succeeded, and Captain Palmer brought his prize triumphantly into the bay. The worthy manager told us this adventure, evidently pleased with the heroic exploit; and in describing all the particulars, he would instinctively move his hand about as if flourishing the wonder-working weapon of destruction about the head of his adversary, the slave-dealer.

We passed a very pleasant evening in the society of our liberal host, and left him reluctantly the next morning. I regretted not being able to cross over to the Banana Islands, but our time would not permit us this indulgence. The persons who are located there, have by their own



exertions erected for themselves a very respectable place for Divine Worship, and there is service regularly performed there by the Schoolmaster, who is a very good and worthy man. There is, moreover, a substantial building, which is occupied by invalids, with the sanction of the Governor, when they go there for change of air and the benefit of their health.

I have often wished to make a tour of the coast, which supplies so many objects of local interest, and furnishes such resources for useful observation, and had proposed something of the kind to three or four friends, but the project was set aside by some unexpected obstacle. Nor was it merely to gratify a love of inquiry or desire for practical information on many subjects that I sought an excursion of this nature. There are many parts of Sierra Leone which would greatly benefit by a ministerial visit of this description in a religious point of view, in the opportunities they would thus have of getting their spiritual wants supplied through the ordinances of the Church ministry, of which they could then avail themselves if they desired them.

The Bullom shore is also a part of the coast which possesses considerable interest, and where much useful and instructive information respecting

the manners and habits of the Natives, as well as the general character of the country, might be ascertained. But various obstacles have hitherto prevented me going to see it, although only a few hours' sail from Free-town. The king or chief of the territory, if you are not forgetful of providing a few presents for his sable majesty, is always ready to receive you with due honour, even greeting your arrival, and accompanying your departure by a salute of cannon of which he is in possession. He will further entertain you with the best of every thing he has; and, moreover, feed you off plate which has been presented to him, showing you sundry other acts of kindness and politeness in return for what your liberality or folly may induce you to give him. But you must take especial care not to go empty and unadorned for the occasion, if you would secure to yourselves the favour of the dark potentate.

Health, however, like life, is a very precarious possession in Sierra Leone; and it too soon fell to my lot to be again laid down, for the third time, with sickness. The pleasing dreams in which Hope and Imagination delight to indulge soon give place, when once fever has smitten you, to sad and painful realities; and days and weeks of protracted suffering and increasing weakness soon

left it no longer a matter of choice whether I should continue to linger on in pain and languor a doubtful existence, or seek in England the only prospect of renovating a shattered frame, and almost ruined constitution. After such sharp struggles with the dreaded enemy, to be again compelled to quit my post of duty was a severe trial. But there was no time for hesitation; it was the alternative of life or death! My departure from the colony was, therefore, quickly determined upon; and the arrival of a man-of-war, which was to sail the next day, supplied me with an excellent opportunity of making a seasonable retreat from the "White Man's Grave!"

Four-and twenty hours, however, is a short notice for a sick man to jump from a bed of fever to his berth. But my good nurse, the dame, did not leave me until the last moment; and although it was an exertion to which I was not equal, the prospect of escaping from becoming a victim to fever, and again setting foot on English soil, nerved me for the effort. Cupboards were soon emptied, and drawers turned out; boxes filled; and bills paid; wines and preserves, and such good things rapidly disappeared; for people are always glad to get these articles, which you are as ready to dispose of at a sacrifice; and preparations for a



passage finished in a few hours. Sharp work ! But excitement, and the thought of "homeward bound" sustained me through the exertions which the emergency called forth. The news of my withdrawal from the colony soon became generally known. Friends poured in to give me their "farewells !" and for a short time, nothing was to be heard but "Good wishes !" and a "Pleasant passage !" Everything being at length arranged, and my kind visitors having left me to myself and my good nurse, I managed to mount a horse, which my lamented and dear friend, the late Commissioner at Sierra Leone, had sent for me, and reached his house, where I took up my abode for the night. Alas ! how little did I think it was to be the last evening I was to spend with him in this world. As regarded myself, it was in the opinion of every one, a doubt, if I ever lived to see the Land's End. This was not my view of the case ; although I could not but be conscious that my situation was a very precarious one. Sick men are generally credulous as to their real state. Yet, in all human probability so far as concerned my poor friend, years of existence appeared to be still in store for him.

The morning came ! Hours passed away rapidly, for there is always something to do up to the

latest moment, when you are quitting a colony, and the time for a parting adieu was at hand. Hark ! It is the signal gun booming from the " Dart." We must be off, and to the wharf. But one minute's respite to tread, perhaps for the last time, the threshold of that Sacred Edifice, where it has been my privilege and happiness to minister in Holy Things ! 'Tis done ! I have contrived by the help of my friends, to drag my feeble limbs to the water's edge, and we are in the boat—servant, sexton and parson, making as fast as we can for the vessel. The ladder is mounted, and I am no longer Chaplain or Colonist for, at least, nine months !

Change of place and air do much every way for the sickly invalid of the Western Coast ; and twelve months' breathing in Old England have made me comparatively a new man. Old scenes will shortly be revived : former labours renewed : fresh hazards run, and the vast Atlantic crossed for the *eleventh time* ! To-morrow, and I shall be steaming it up Channel towards that land proverbial for unhealthiness, and dreaded for its fever ! My book and my country—my home and all its tender endearments, will have been left behind. I shall not have the satisfaction of knowing the fate of these volumes which I now send forth to the world.

But "who can control his fate?" Submission is our duty as well as wisdom. I must, therefore, square accounts with my reader, and only hope, that should he derive amusement or instruction from the perusal of these papers, he will deal gently with their imperfections and bestow a kindly wish and prayer on their absent author !

THE END.

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